



THE INDEPENDENT

N° 3,273

THURSDAY 17 APRIL 1997

WEATHER: Mainly warm and sunny (45p) 40p

IN THE TABLOID

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THE TABLOID

EDUCATION+ ADREN WHO SWEAR - CURABLE?



John Major takes on the Tories

Prime Minister's personal appeal on Europe

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

It was the defining moment of the 1997 general election campaign: the point at which the Prime Minister turned his back on Labour, and took on the opponents within his own Government and party.

Openly defied by junior ministers who had broken ranks and all the rules of Whitehall discipline to oppose a European single currency, John Major was forced to take on the dissidents.

But the not continued apace last night, with yet another minister, Eric Forth, coming out against the single currency.

Instead of celebrating a further fall in unemployment, as planned, the Conservative leader turned his daily press conference into a repeat of his long-standing appeal to keep the option open on a single currency.

To the delight of the Tory pro-Europeans, Mr Major courageously stood his ground.

But he left his party's vociferous Eurosceptics in despair that he had not snatched the opportunity to swing the election by grabbing the votes of diehard opponents of anything to do with Brussels.

Opening his vain appeal to the rebels, Mr Major said: "Everyone who's been out there in the country in this campaign knows where the heart and gut of this election lies." That issue, he said, was the question of a federal Europe.

All the reports *The Independent* received from around the country yesterday suggested that Europe was not at all the number one issue with the voters. The prime concerns were education, health and crime.

A former minister defending a safe Tory seat said that the only people raising Europe were older voters, in their 50s and 60s, who were essentially Euro-sceptic. That was an impression from a number of former



Hand of faith: John Major confronts his party faithful.
(Photographs: David Modell/IFG. Main photograph: Russell Boyce)

ministers who had been canvassing.

But there was no question about the target of Mr Major's appeal - his own party. Never had such a vital issue been "so woefully misunderstood".

Mr Major said: "No one at this moment, no one whatever they say, whatever their instincts may be, no one can be absolutely cer-

tain in what way it would affect us, or what the outcome will be, whether we joined the single currency, or whether we stayed out."

Yet the Conservative ministers and MPs who had come out against the single currency appeared certain enough.

Mr Major's own assessment of the balance for and against the currency could not

have been more even-handed. If it worked, the single currency could provide rising living standards across Europe. If it failed it could bring "economic catastrophe across the whole of Europe."

But he concluded by saying that until the negotiations had been finalised no one could know which way the balance would lie.

"Whether you agree with me or disagree

with me; like me or loathe me, don't bind my hands when I am negotiating on behalf of the British nation."

Mr Major said he was often urged by critics to rule the whole single currency issue in, or out, entirely. "It would be splendidly decisive, they say - so splendidly decisive you would send the British Prime Minister naked into that conference chamber with

nothing to negotiate, with nothing to bring the best deal out of our partners."

But the immediate reaction from his own party gave few grounds for hope of unity.

John Redwood, the most prominent dissident, said: "I am not going to change my position. I am a consistent man. I have thought it through. On principle I oppose the single currency economically, constitutionally and politically."

More damaging, Sir Marcus Fox, chairman of the backbench 1922 committee, told BBC radio's *World at One* that he supported the two Ministers who had stepped out of line - Mr Horam and Mr Paice. "We are putting a marker down simply to say that we have very strong feelings and we don't want a single currency. We don't want to lose the pound," he said.

As for the two ministers, Mr Major told his press conference: "We have spoken to those two ministers overnight. They realise how unwise they were. They realise that they have to accept our negotiate-and-decide policy. They realise that they are bound by collective responsibility."

But the chairman of Mr Horam's Orpington constituency Conservative association, Phil Winter, told the *World at One*: "...As far as Mr Horam is concerned we have always understood he has maintained the party line of wait and see, but he has expressed his opinion and has the full support of the association."

From the party's pro-European wing, one Minister said: "Mr Major's response was courageous, and it could prove a turning point in the party's internal battle. Certainly, he has surprised those of us who were beginning to despair of when he was going to stand his ground."

Intruding on the Tories' grief, Tony Blair said in Southampton: "We are witnessing the collapse of the Conservative Party under the weight of its own divisions."

Labour studies privatising Post Office

Michael Harrison

Labour is examining plans put forward by the Post Office to privatise the organisation if it wins the election in a move which could raise £2bn towards the "black hole" in the public finances.

Two options are understood to be under consideration. One is to sell 49 per cent of the Post Office, thus keeping it in public ownership, but at the same time give it commercial freedom to raise money on the financial markets and enter joint ventures with private sector partners.

The second more radical option is to sell a 51 per cent

stake in the Post Office but retain a "golden share". This would enable Labour to ring fence monopoly services such as the Royal Mail and guarantee a universal service to every address in the country at a uniform price.

As a first step to privatisation, the Post Office could be reconstituted as a 100 per cent government-owned company. This change of status would free it from Treasury spending rules, giving it the freedom to fight growing competition from overseas post offices and private mail firms such as DHL, TNT and Federal Express.

Labour's deputy leader John

Prescott, a strong advocate of partnerships between the private and public sector, has been briefed on the plans by John

Post Office.

Both are said to favour "commercialisation" of the Post Office, including the introduc-

tion of private capital, although Mr Prescott may balk at the sale of 51 per cent. If Labour does sell part of the Post Office, it would mark a

further significant step in its conversion to privatisation following confirmation that it will look at the sale of air traffic control. It would also mean that Labour had succeeded where Michael Heseltine failed. Mr Heseltine was prevented from privatising the Post Office in 1995 after a backbench Tory revolt.

One source said: "They are determined to deliver a solution to the Post Office's needs where Michael Heseltine failed." Labour has confirmed it would consider the sale of Parcelforce, which has long been slated for privatisation. However, Post Office chiefs

have cautioned it against piecemeal sales arguing that Parcelforce should be kept intact and sold along with Royal Mail and the Counters network. The Post Office made a profit of £422m in 1995-96 and in the current financial year is budgeted to contribute £330m to government finances through its External Finance Limit. A 100 per cent sale could raise £4bn.

But a more attractive

solution might be to give it commercial freedom and then sell a half stake. This could raise £2bn instantly but give Labour a continuing stream of income through the EFL.

Labour are determined to deliver a solution where Michael Heseltine failed

Roberts, chief executive of the Post Office. So too has Kim Howells, the member of Labour's trade and industry team with responsibility for the

tion of private capital, although Mr Prescott may balk at the sale of 51 per cent. If Labour does sell part of the Post Office, it would mark a

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Snake legs it straight out of Eden

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Michelangelo seems to have got it at least partly right, when in the Sistine Chapel he depicted the snake in the Garden of Eden as having arms.

Except for one detail: the last things snakes lost was their legs, according to scientists who reckon they have found a 97-million-year-old missing link.

If the details are confirmed of the fossilised skeleton, which was found, appropriately enough, 20km north of Jerusalem, then it may answer one of evolution's great unsolved mysteries: how did

lizards lose their limbs and become snakes?

The suggestion is that the most primitive ancestor of the snake, called *Pachyrhachis problematicus*, evolved during the Cretaceous period between 136 and 165 million years ago.

It had a pelvis and tiny but well-formed hind limbs, which would fit with the fact that modern-day boa constrictors have traces of a pelvic girdle, and even have limited vestiges of back legs.

Michael Caldwell, of Alberta University, Edmonton, and Michael Lee, of Sydney University, reckon that *Pachyrhachis problematicus* may have

lived in the sea before its descendants moved onto dry land.

Because snake skeletons are delicate structures, they tend not to form clear fossils, leading to gaps in the evolutionary table.

"The search for the origin of snakes has proved to be a thorn in the side of vertebrate paleontologists," commented Nicholas Fraser, of the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

The appropriately named *Pachyrhachis problematicus* was originally classed as a snake, and then as a lizard, when it was discovered 20 years ago.

But the Canadian and Australian fossil hunters, who report their work today in the science

journal *Nature*, found new evidence that *Pachyrhachis problematicus* is really the most primitive snake. It has a snake-like head, a long, slender body, no forelimbs but well-developed hind limbs.

They further claim that snakes are related to a group of lizards which include the present-day monitors, such as the Komodo Dragon, from Asia.

This group includes several kinds of extinct sea-lizard, which may be the distant ancestors of snakes. Best known of these are the mosasaurs, giant sea monsters that died out at the same time as dinosaurs, 65 million years ago.



Serpent with limbs: Detail from the Sistine Chapel

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Policeman jailed for death crash to keep his job

A policeman who was jailed after causing two deaths during a 100mph pursuit is to keep his job after being released from jail, a West Midlands police disciplinary hearing decided yesterday.

PC Leslie Collins, 43, was given a three-month prison sentence at Birmingham Crown Court in February after being convicted of causing the death by dangerous driving of his colleague PC Robert Dallow, 41, and innocent motorist Neil Homer, 20, of Oldbury, West Midlands. He was also banned from driving for two years.

Mr Homer's father Dennis said: "We are too upset to speak about this at the moment. I will give my side of the story but we have been treated disgracefully for the past 15 months. I'm not prepared to say anything further at the moment."

Killer agrees to extradition

Triple killer Alan Reeve, arrested in the Irish Republic this month after absconding from Broadmoor special hospital in 1981, yesterday agreed to return to Britain in accordance with an application for his extradition.

Reeve, 49, is expected to be flown to Britain within 48 hours, after signing consent to two extradition warrants in Dublin. He told Dublin District Court he was agreeing to be extradited because he was confident he would be released from detention on his return, because of his "good behaviour over a long period of time".

Actors reject new pay offer

The actors' union Equity last night refused an improved pay offer yesterday to 35,000 actors aimed at averting a nationwide shutdown.

The union said it had rejected the Theatrical Management Association offer - covering the "vast majority" of 100 subsidised regional British theatres, and raising actors' basic minimum salary from £190 to £250 a week by April next year - because it excluded 24 theatres from the main pay increase and offered only £4 a week extra in subsistence payments. However, the two sides have agreed to meet for further talks on Monday.

Robins all the rage in style stakes



The three-wheeled transport made famous by Del Boy in television's *Only Fools and Horses* has become the latest craze in Austria. Robin Reliant manufacturers have been flooded with orders since young executives in Vienna decided it was chic to be seen driving the SLX model. Workers at the factory's base in Tamworth, Staffordshire, are working "flat out" to keep up with the demand, and there is now a 12-week waiting list as staff work on an order for 40 vehicles, worth £280,000.

'Wicked' prostitute jailed for life

A prostitute was sentenced to custody for life at the Old Bailey yesterday for murdering a wealthy banker who tape-recorded his own horrific death.

Judge Henry Fennell QC told 20-year-old Samantha Enoch of Clapham, south London: "In this court there have been some calculated, calculating and callous defendants, but few to touch you ... you are dangerous, devious and wicked." Enoch had claimed she had nothing to do with the death of Syrian-born Habib Saliba, who was stabbed 26 times at his flat in London in June last year. Ronald Tamplin, 27, who was also accused of murder, was cleared.

Islanders in poison scare

A military bomb disposal team has been sent to the Outer Hebridean island of Barra to examine a canister washed up on the beach only days after a mystery illness struck eight people on the island.

Islanders are concerned there may be a link between the "flu type" sickness and the 145,000 tons of germ warfare chemicals dumped in deep water off the Hebrides after the Second World War. Barra councillor, Captain Roddy Mackinnon last night appealed to the Ministry of Defence not to destroy the canister before analysing its contents. The MoD has been dismissive of suggestions that the dumped chemicals could be the cause of the illness, but there are suspicions on the island that the canister could be destroyed to eliminate any evidence. **Stephen Goodwin**

Academy award for Elton John

Rock star Elton John yesterday returned to his *alma mater*, the Royal Academy of Music in London, to be awarded honorary membership. The singer-songwriter, who studied at the junior academy from age 11 to 15, joined an "exclusive club" of "eminent musicians", whose 250 members include conductor Bernard Haitink and tenor Jose Carreras. Previous recipients of the award include Mendelssohn, Liszt and Richard Strauss.

Leading article, page 19

Church arsonists strike again

Another Catholic church in Northern Ireland has been damaged in a fire believed to have been started by arsonists. Firemen managed to restrict damage to the church at Annacloy, near Banbridge, County Down, to the vestry. Since the beginning of last year there have been 48 attacks on places of worship in Northern Ireland.

people



Nicola Foulston: Strong views on commercial potential of motor racing (Photograph: Philip Meech)

Businesswoman of the year kicks wall of testosterone

It would be an understatement to call the new *Veuve Clicquot* Businesswoman of the Year confrontational. Nicola Foulston, chief executive of Brands Hatch, loves nothing better than a scrap with the blazer-and-cravat-wearing male motor racing establishment.

For instance, Ms Foulston, 29, believes her fellow racetrack owners are wrong to concentrate on the sport. They should be in it for the money, she says.

"I have very strong views on this. We should be making a profit. This is a serious business. We should not concentrate on the sport as a priority."

Her jaundiced view of the sport and her unwillingness to pull punches owe much to her background. Her involvement with Brands Hatch began when she was 11, when her father suddenly fell in love with motor racing and brought his elder daughter along to help polish the cars and run errands.

John Foulston, the founder of Atlantic computers, built up a £40m fortune through computer-leasing and, in May 1986, bought Brands Hatch to satisfy his new-found passion.

A year later, while testing an open-topped McLaren, he crashed and was killed. Rather than putting her off,

Ms Foulston, then 19, decided to drop out of her maths degree course and concentrate on turning Brands Hatch into a profit-making business.

As such, she has run into a wall of testosterone. "It's clearly a very male-dominated industry - in the pit lane and the paddock particularly. But there are a lot of women working in the marketing and administration of the sport," she says.

Her life revolves around her business, and she is happy to remain single. She was briefly married to her helicopter instructor, Craig Sargeant, but they split up in 1994 after less than a year.

When she took over Brands Hatch it was "fairly run down", she says. Since then the headquarters and conference centre, named after her father, were built for £2.8m. New pits were built at a cost of £2.9m. A deal with BMW gave the Nigel Mansell driving school 40 new saloons. Renegotiation of television coverage meant the company stopped paying for coverage and instead received an income of £100,000 a year.

And with her company now making over £2m a year in profit, she clearly sees herself as the winner.

John Willcock

Soul star Mark Morrison must go to jail

Mark Morrison, the soul singer who brought us *Moan and Groan* and *Horny* was feeling slightly less energetic yesterday after he was told he faced a jail sentence for threatening a police officer with an electric stun gun.

Morrison, 24, who has had five Top 10 hits including a number one last summer, was convicted of the charges which related to an incident outside a 24-hour supermarket in west London last October as he returned home with friends at 4.30am, after an evening spent nightclubbing.

Plain-clothes police officers initially believed he had been planning a robbery and moved to arrest him as he left the shop and walked towards his chauffeur-driven Mercedes.

Detective Constable John Cushion told the court Morrison turned to him, raising his right hand which was holding the stun gun.

"I feared he was going to fire the gun into my body and I hit him on the head with my radio," said the officer. "He was trying to use the gun on me but I struggled with him and prevented it."

Morrison admitted to Marylebone Magistrates Court in west London that he had possessed the illegal stun gun, which he bought in the US for his own protection. It can deliver a charge of 23,000



volts, causing "involuntary muscle contraction, pain, shock, a loss of balance and mental confusion".

The singer denied using threatening behaviour and said he feared for his life. He felt "insulted" and "disrespected" after being accused of robbery.

Stipendiary magistrate David Kennett-Brown told the pop star: "These very serious offences can only be properly dealt with by way of a custodial sentence." Sentencing was adjourned until 14 May.

Leaving court amid a posse of minders, a pair of celebrity sunglasses could not hide his tears.

Maybe Morrison's recent stage performances were tempting fate. They involved him brandishing handcuffs, backed by female dancers clad as mini-skirted policemen.

Matthew Brace

Diplomatic role for Sidney Poitier

Hollywood star Sidney Poitier took on a new role yesterday, representing the Bahamas as ambassador to Japan. The 70-year-old Oscar-winning actor, who holds dual US and Bahamian nationality, took up the post in a ceremony presided over by Emperor Akihito at the Imperial Palace.

"It's exhilarating, it's a very satisfying feeling," he said, after formally presenting his credentials to the emperor.

Poitier, who has only visited Japan twice before, and has no plans to live here, will carry out his duties while continuing to make movies around the world.

"There will be times when I will make films, there will be times when I will probably direct films. There will be no time when I'm not available to fulfil my responsibilities as an ambassador," he said.

It's just as well Poitier is not planning to live in Tokyo, since the 700-island Caribbean nation has no embassy in Japan.

He said it was important to him to help promote the country where he grew up and which was the home of his parents and forefathers.

"I was raised in the Bahamas. My roots are there. I am as familiar with that society and its people as I am with America and there is in the present government a need for me to be of some service," he said.

Reuters

briefing

HEALTH

Risk in home births for first-time mothers

First-time mothers planning a home birth are at high risk of ending up in hospital because of complications during labour, a study has found. The survey of 6,000 home births during 1994 found 15 per cent of women booked for delivery at home had to be transferred to hospital for delivery but among first-time mothers the proportion rose to 40 per cent. The chief reason was prolonged labour.

Geoffrey Chamberlain, Emeritus Professor of Obstetrics at the University of London, who conducted the study, said that 10 per cent of first-time mothers asked for home births but many might be better off in hospital. "Most women who want a home birth feel it will be more satisfying and they will be more in control but they should realise that it may not end up that way." **Jeremy Laurence**

TRAVEL

Airport is bottom of the pops

Frankfurt airport has been singled out as the worst tourist facility in central Europe, narrowly beating a Sound of Music Tour of Salzburg. The guide book publisher Lonely Planet asked the eight authors of its new *Central Europe on a Shoestring* for their highlights and lowlights of the region. The writers voted the Sound of Music Tour runner-up, not least for the antics of other participants. "Loutish youths skipping in the summer house chanting 'I am 16 going on 17', or manic Julie Andrews impersonators bounding in the fields, screaming 'The hills are alive'."

In third place was the resort of Stofok on Lake Balaton in Hungary. Wine cellars in Vienna's popular suburb of Grinzing take a hit in fourth place. Lower down the order, the Warsaw branch of McDonald's and the Nova Huta industrial complex put in appearances for Poland. Munich's *Bierfest* also rates a touristic health warning.

The writers' votes on central Europe's highlights puts Prague in pole position, followed by the Alps, Budapest and Czech beer. *Central Europe on a Shoestring*, £13.99, Lonely Planet. Simon Calder



FOOD

Marinated meat cuts cancer risk

Marinating chicken in olive oil, lemon and garlic has been suggested as a recipe for preventing cancer. Coating chicken pieces in the marinade before grilling are said to reduce the production of cancer-promoting chemicals in the meat.

Grilling or frying beef and chicken is known to convert harmless compounds in the muscle tissue into heterocyclic amines, which promote the formation of tumours. The researchers from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California wanted to test a theory that carcinogen production might be affected by preparation methods, they write in *New Scientist*.

They took medallions of chicken breast and marinated half in a mixture of olive oil, brown sugar, cider vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, salt and mustard. After being cooked for 20 minutes, the marinated meat contained only a tenth of the heterocyclic amines found in the unmarinated meat. But if the meat was overcooked for a further 20 minutes, another type of heterocyclic amine was 10 times more abundant in the marinated samples.

ASTRONOMY

Gamma ray riddle solved

Astronomers reckon they have solved the mystery of "gamma ray bursts" - points in the sky which emit brief but incredibly powerful bursts of very short-wave radiation. Since the phenomenon was first observed, in 1973, theories about their origin have abounded - from neutron stars to the warp drives of alien space craft.

Writing in the science journal *Nature* today, a team at the University of Alabama, coordinating an international effort, said they had seen a point of light to match the source of gamma rays. Usually such bursts are so brief that by the time a telescope can be trained on them, they have died away.

The team said the intense light, discovered 20 minutes after the initial gamma rays, could have come from an explosive collision between two neutron stars - the incredibly dense remnants of burnt-out stars - at the far end of the universe. If this is so, the explosion would be the brightest in the universe, perhaps releasing as much energy in a few seconds as the sun does in a billion years.

The telescopes showed a blur in the sky which lasted for a month before it faded out.

Charles Arthur

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تحتفظ من الأصل

The New Romantics: Barbara Cartland gives way to a world of gay embraces

David Lister
Arts News Editor

The love scene is tender, passionate - and all-male. For the first time the winner of a major award for romantic fiction has among its protagonists two homosexual lovers. Romantic fiction appears to have found a mixture of voices for the Nineties. One is likely to be homoerotic; another is likely to be feminist; exploration of the anxieties of juggling employment with marriage is commonplace.

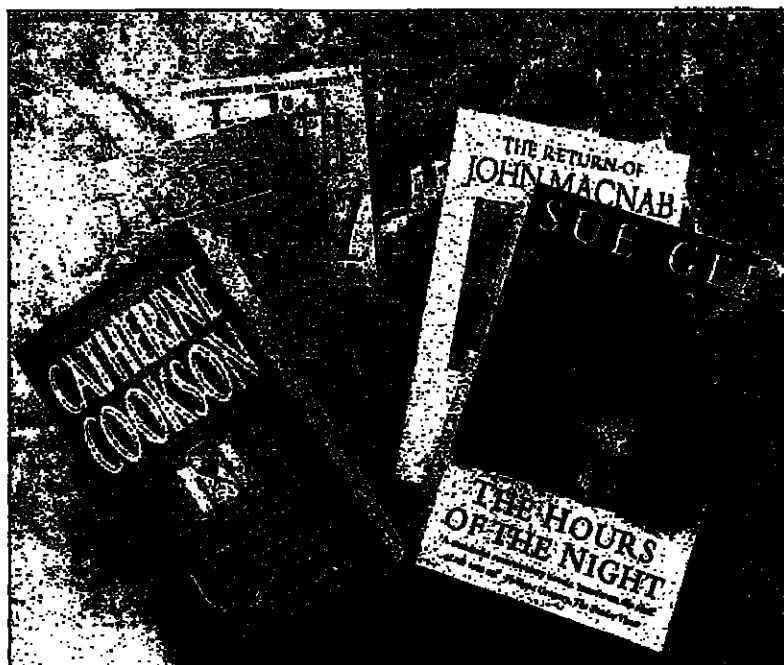
The genre remains the largest single sector of the adult paperback fiction market. But its subject-matter is no longer one that Barbara Cartland or Mills and Boon would easily recognise. Yesterday the £5,000 Romantic Novelist Of the Year Award was won by a university lecturer, Sue Gee. Her novel contains a staple of traditional romantic fiction, a virginal young woman pining after a rugged, handsome farmer. But from there it moves swiftly to *fin-de-siècle* romance. *The Hours Of The Night* contains no love scene for the virginal poet heroine, but a passionate one between the man she desires and his homosexual partner.

Gee, who teaches writing and publishing at Middlesex University, plans to donate £1,000 of the £5,000 prize money to the English PEN Committee for Writers in Prison. She beat a shortlist that included Lisa Appignanesi, former deputy director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts. She has swapped putting on radical exhibitions and organising talks for the defence of Salman Rushdie for writing romance.

Yet their inclusion on a romantic fiction shortlist comes as a surprise to both of them. Perhaps that is a sign of growing pains within the Romantic Novelists Association, which even as it gave the award, was balloting members about a change of name for its association. Or perhaps it is just a sign that romantic fiction is being belatedly redefined.

Gee said yesterday: "I was fairly astonished to be told that this was romantic fiction. This is the least romantic book I have written. It's about a woman who falls in love with a homosexual man, and there's a strong homosexual relationship. It's about different aspects of love. It's nice to win, but I didn't see it as a romantic novel and I didn't even know it had been submitted."

Appignanesi, who used to teach European literature, based her book



Passion artists: In *The Hours of the Night*, Sue Gee (right) speaks with a very different voice from old-style romancers such as Barbara Cartland (below)



Marketing millions

The romantic market accounts for a large share of total book sales: figures for 1996 show that the genre made more than £16 million for publishers during the 12-month period, writes Becky Lloyd.

Sales on the general market for the first 12 weeks of this year total 43,000 copies, to a value of £188,945. However, this figure does not take into account supermarket sales, which, if included, would at least double the amounts involved.

The romantic bestseller list for week ending 12 April 1997:

1. Judith McNaught - Remember When (Pocket Books)
2. Marilyn Tracy - Code Name Daddy (Silhouette Books)
3. Betty Neels - Sister Peters in Amsterdam (Mills and Boon)
4. Sally Wentworth - Guilty Wife (Mills and Boon)
5. Betty Neels - Promise of Happiness (Mills and Boon)

Figures courtesy of BookTrack

A *Good Woman* on observing people in Paris. "I never think of myself as writing romantic fiction. But quite often there's sexuality and desire at the core of it, all those ICA words. Every woman of my generation is a feminist, simply can't help but be."

Lizzie Buchan, who won the award in 1994, said then: "The

shoulder-padded female with her belt notched with orgasms has gone, along with Porsches and Margaret Thatcher. Books that debate and emphasise some kind of values are coming back into fashion."

Mrs Buchan, who is married to the grandson of John Buchan and who now chairs the Romantic Novelists

Association, says romantic fiction has too often been confused with romance, which is nearer to the Mills and Boon novel. Romantic fiction, she says, follows in the tradition of *Jane Eyre* and works by Hardy. In *Far From the Madding Crowd*, his heroine goes through three men. Out of that he sets a study of character and

landscape which informs and enriches the personal drama played out.

"There are writers on our shortlist who could begin to emulate Hardy or Brontë if they wished to. The change now is that by and large the 19th century romantic novels stopped at the altar. The romantic novel today is much more willing to

look at marriage. They also incorporate our preoccupation with human consciousness and psychology. But they still tend to have a strong narrative drive, whereas other writers are interested in words and mood." Writers and readers of romantic fiction largely continue to be female. There are few men among

the association's 400 members. But yesterday's shortlist did include a man. Andrew Greig wrote *The Return of John Macnab*, a sequel to a work by Buchan.

He too says that he did not think of himself as writing romantic fiction, but is happy to be labelled a romantic.



"Edward lay in his lover's arms and watched him sleeping ...

... the farmhouse was quiet: the deep, undisturbed peace of a Sunday afternoon, with the light fading at the window onto the yard, the covers heavy, love complete. Down in the unlit kitchen Tarn stirred in her basket, whimpered, settled again: it was so quiet he could hear the wicker creaking, and the steady tick of the clock, which drew breath and struck the hour.

Rowland, sleeping, heard it, and shifted, and opened his eyes.

"Shh. Don't move." He shook his head, reached for the watch on the table. Four o'clock.

"Time for me to go, I'm afraid."

He kissed Edward's head, and made to get up.

"Not yet," said Edward. "Please, not yet."

"I must."

"Once more."

"You can't mean it."

"I can. All this time without you."

"It's only a week."

"Only? Only?"

An extract from *The Hours Of The Night* by Sue Gee

Trainspotting, Spice Girls and Gucci pants: Bishops reveal their worldly wisdom

Clare Garner

Nineties bishops know their Spice. Far from living in the Dark Ages, Britain's clergy are up to speed on popular culture, with a working knowledge of the Spice Girls, *Trainspotting* and Giorgio Armani.

Shedding their image of spiritual detachment, all 32 bishops responding to a survey by The Church of England Newspaper, had heard of the Spice Girls. Although this might say as much about the omnipresence of the all-girl band as their own worldliness, the bishops went further.

Unlike John Major and Tony Blair, who can name two and three of the Spice Girls respectively, one bishop, the Pakistani-born Bishop of Rochester, the Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali, could name all five and another, the Rt Rev Lindsay Urwin, the Bishop

of Horsham, could name four. Eighty-four per cent could put a name to at least one - despite the fact that only 93 per cent owned a television set - and some had gleaned that the Spice Girls (allegedly) can't sing.

One unnamed bishop, evidently a fan of Indian food, let the side down. He invented a completely new band member known as "Hot Spice". Another said: "Those are the girls who don't wear very much."

Toting up their contemporary culture cred, 81 per cent knew that *The English Patient* had won nine Oscars, 43 per cent that Irvine Welsh wrote *Trainspotting*, and 45 per cent that Phil de Glanville was the current England rugby union captain.

The survey, which is published tomorrow, also revealed that the bishops are *au fait* with fashion, with 68 per cent able to name a brand of designer clothing. Thirty-two per cent said they enjoyed wearing

the same brands as their flock, such as Calvin Klein and Ben Sherman, as well as watching the same programmes, such as *Friends*, *Casualty*, *EastEnders* and *Neighbours*.

Some bishops admitted to using their street wisdom to get on to their congregation's wavelength. The Bishop of Bedford boasted that he had managed to slip Gucci underwear into one of his sermons, while the Bishop of Horsham chose to jazz up his sermons with references to songs such as "Search for the Hero" by M People.

But despite its efforts to appear more *Top of the Pops* than *Songs of Praise*, the Church of England still has some way to go. A press release on the survey revealed that Bishop Nazir-Ali could "name all three" Spice Girls.

How the Bishops fared in the survey

How many:
Owned a TV set: 93 per cent (30 bishops)
Knew Mulder and Scully starred in the *X-Files*: 34 per cent (11)
Knew *The English Patient* won nine Oscars: 81 per cent (26)
Had heard of the Spice Girls: 100 per cent (32)
Knew that there were five in the band: 84 per cent (27). One bishop named all five, one got four of the names and two others got two.
Knew the book and film by Irvine Welsh on drugs was *Trainspotting*: 43 per cent (14).
Knew that Phil de Glanville was the current England rugby captain: 45 per cent (15)
Named a brand of designer clothing: 68 per cent (22) - including Levis (6), Gucci (5), Armani (3), Calvin Klein (2), Versace, Boss, Next, Dior, Lacoste.
(Total bishops surveyed: 32)



Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali: Can 'name all three' Spice Girls

Rembrandt found in antique shop

Simon Reeve

A lost work by Rembrandt, hidden for four centuries, has been discovered on the back of an oil painting sold by a Yorkshire antique shop.

The "exceptionally rare" copperplate by the Dutch master was only revealed when an art expert decided to take a closer look at the painting by the Flemish artist Pieter Gysels.

After removing the Gysels from its frame and examining the copperplate behind it, Lisbeth Heenk from the Christies auction house "immediately" recognised it as a Rembrandt. Further research soon proved it to be one of only seven unsol-

lited Rembrandt copperplates in the world.

Rembrandt's etchings were highly-prized while the painter was working. He would use the plates to make reprints when he had run out of stock of a particular print. However, other plates were often badly re-worked or restored and lost their original appearance.

According to Ms Heenk, the plate is of particular interest because it has never been re-worked or restored and reveals the true mastery of Rembrandt's technique.

"This plate was used for one of the most superb of Rembrandt's etchings," said Heenk. "Of all plates known to us, this

one is certainly in the best condition as it was never reworked after Rembrandt's death. The fact that Pieter Gysels made a landscape on the reverse makes the plate a very exciting historic document."

The Rembrandt plate is entitled "Abraham Entertaining the Angels". It was cut in 1656, the year Rembrandt was declared a bankrupt. His precarious financial situation may have forced him to sell the plate. It is possible Gysel bought it directly, and then painted the landscape directly onto the copper surface some time before his death in 1691.

The family of the painting's present owner, who has asked

to remain anonymous, bought it in 1946 from a small antique shop. "My family have always enjoyed the painting and admired the work of the artist, but imagine my amazement when it was divulged that there was a Rembrandt original hidden on the reverse," said the owner. "I was stunned - we had no idea."

The copperplate and the picture were displayed publicly yesterday for the first time in four centuries and will be sold at auction in June. Although the new owners will have additional worries about how to insure the work, they will also have to decide how to hang the plate or painting: do they prefer Gysels or Rembrandt?

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Yacoub: Why I didn't tell of risk to baby

The pioneering cardiac surgeon Sir Magdi Yacoub told a judge yesterday that the risk of heart transplant children suffering serious permanent brain damage was so small he would not tell the parents about it unless specifically asked.

Professor Yacoub, who gave 10-year-old Matthew Poynter a new heart when he was just 16-months-old, was replying to accusations that his team at Harefield hospital wrongly failed to warn the baby's parents of the possibility of brain injuries.

Kevin and Linda Poynter, of Biggleswade, Bedfordshire are suing Hillingdon Health Authority in the High Court for damages on behalf of their severely disabled son.

They say they would have refused consent for the transplant had they been told of the risk, which tragically turned into reality.

The court has heard that Matthew, whose brain injuries occurred when he suffered a cardiac arrest during anaesthesia, was the only child to sustain brain damage among the 268 infants who have received new hearts at Harefield.

Prof Yacoub, a consultant cardiologist at the hospital in west London since 1968,

gave evidence that the brain damage risk was less than one per cent. Parents were normally told of the risks of death or other common complications, but brain damage was not common.

He told Simeon Maskrey QC for the Poynters, that he could not recall speaking to Mr and Mrs Poynter before Matthew's operation in December 1987, or whether he was told of their reluctance to consent to transplantation.

If he had been made aware that they were anxious to have all available information on potential disability, he would have felt under a duty to speak to them.

The judge asked Prof Yacoub what he would have told them.

Sir Magdi said he would have spoken of the risks and benefits, but would probably not have told them about the small risk of brain damage unless specifically asked.

"I did not consider then, and don't consider now, that serious brain damage is such a common condition that I ought to volunteer information," he said.

Questioned by Mr Maskrey, he said he was aware of the critical nature of Matthew's blood circulation before the operation, but this was not un-

common and he could not recall being particularly concerned.

He was aware that Matthew was considered incapable of receiving intravenous anaesthetic, but had no knowledge of the effect the halothane gas could have on his circulation.

"I am not an anaesthetist. That is an anaesthetic matter," said Prof Yacoub.

Mr Maskrey suggested that, in that case, he had been in no position to assess the risk of the baby suffering a cardiac arrest during anaesthesia.

Sir Magdi disagreed, saying he relied on experience. The anaesthetist was very experienced and it was up to him to decide on the drugs used.

Dr Richard Kirk, a former member of Prof Yacoub's team, denied telling Mrs Poynter that the hospital would have to consider seeking a court order if she continued to refuse consent to a transplant.

"I can't understand why I should have made such a statement to her," he said. If anything, he was "over-zealous" in giving information to parents about the risks, he said.

The hearing continues today with expert medical evidence and is expected to end tomorrow.

Disarming act of the lone bagpiper



Calling the tune: Great Highland piper and tutor James Clark Caution playing his bagpipes on Primrose Hill in north London, yesterday on the 250th anniversary of the Disarming Act, which outlawed all aspects of Highland culture, including the bagpipes. Photograph: Andrew Burman

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There's a great deal going on

Door opened on the secret world of the marital dispute

Roger Dobson

The secret world of the marital row is being probed by researchers investigating the effects of domestic feuding on teenage children.

Volunteer children and their families are being quizzed about their relationships and some of them will be filmed as they discuss thorny topics like money, education, schooling, and in-laws. Psychologists will then assess how the children react and what situations they find the most stressful.

Psychologists at the University of Wales, Cardiff, are recruiting 500 schoolchildren aged 12 to 15 and their families for a three to five year study into the effect of marital conflict on the children and its links with childhood depression and behavioural problems.

One theory being tested is that children model themselves on the behaviour of their parents. Another is that youngsters come out better if the argument between their parents is settled in front of them. Yet another is that children who witness arguments between their parents feel less secure in their own relationships with their parents.

The aim of the work is to come up with advice for parents on how feuding may affect their children, says family psychologist, Dr Gordon Harold.

"Children clearly respond to what is going on between parents. We will be looking at the children's perceptions of events and about depression, maladjustment and anti-social behaviour. We will be looking at the child's understanding of



Row stress: how children react

Photograph: TCL

what is happening and the effects. Are the effects, for example, more potent if the child is the focus of the argument?" he said.

"Conflict of some kind occurs in all homes. The bottom line to this research is finding information that will help parents understand how children interpret family events, how they view the sort of things that parents take for granted. We want to show parents how their behaviour can affect children."

In the first part of the research, the children will fill in questionnaires about their family life, and the parents will complete similar forms about their marriage and relationship.

Parents will be asked, for instance, about marital satisfaction and whether, when disagreements arise, they result in husbands or wives giving in or whether there is give and

take. They will be asked about measures of agreement and disagreement over a variety of domestic issues.

Once the forms are done, the researchers are planning a second phase in which some of the volunteer families will be filmed both in a family interaction laboratory at the university and in sessions at home.

"At this observational stage, some families who volunteer will come into the laboratory and sit in front of a camera and talk. After that we would like to put camcorders in some people's homes, maybe their kitchens, because you really need to see how they behave in their natural environment," said Dr Harold.

The team hope that by pinpointing what children find the most stressful, strategies can be introduced which will lessen the likelihood of behavioural problems in later adolescence.

Frustrated judge seeks rethink on verdicts

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

A judge called yesterday for a Scottish-style "not proven" verdict for England and Wales after a jury failed to reach verdicts for a second time on theft charges against a former Salvation Army financial adviser.

Judge Gerald Butler QC said no fault should be attached to the jury at Southwark Crown Court for failing to come to a decision as he formally ordered that Stuart Ford, of Halifax, West Yorkshire, be found not guilty on all counts.

But the judge told the court he regretted that the option of returning a not proven verdict, as in the Scottish legal system, was not available.

Because this was the second time a jury has split, the Crown

Prosecution Service will not pursue another criminal trial, although the Salvation Army has already successfully sued Mr Ford and others in a High Court action in 1995 for the loss of a total of £5.6m from its funds in 1992.

Mr Ford was found to be personally liable for about £2m and the Court of Appeal later rejected his challenge against the ruling.

The not proven verdict is a half-way house between discharging the heavy burden of proving guilt beyond reasonable doubt and an acquittal.

The judge said: "My duty is to enter verdicts of not guilty on these counts."

"It does occur to me we might learn something from the Scottish jurisdiction. This is not the first time a second jury

has failed to agree in a case with which I am concerned."

"In the Scottish jurisdiction the judge asked the jury if they find the defendant guilty or not guilty or if the case against him is not proven."

"If we had a not proven verdict here it might assist in a case of this kind."

Major Peter Smith, the Salvation Army's Legal and Parliamentary Secretary, said: "I am pleased to say donations have remained at strong levels in recent years, despite some misinformed comments concerning the circumstances of the original loss in 1992."

"Our supporters have clearly realised that the Army was a victim of fraud and their confidence was rewarded when we announced the full recovery of all lost money."

تمت من الأصل

Just suppose that you could stroll from the National Gallery to Poet's Corner without crossing a road...

Jonathan Glancey
Architecture Correspondent

Imagine being able to amble freely, head in the clouds, from the early Italian Renaissance rooms of the National Gallery in London, across Trafalgar Square, down Whitehall and through Parliament Square all the way to Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey.

No chance of being run over by raging motorists, no stepping around civil servants' cars parked shamelessly in Horse Guards Parade. Enhanced settings for famous buildings and all but forgotten monuments.

A Millennium project to transform the heart of Westminster - "World Squares for All" - was announced yesterday by Westminster City Council. Consultants led by the architect Sir Norman Foster have drawn up a plan to connect Trafalgar Square, Horse Guards Parade, Whitehall, Parliament Square and the Thames at Hungerford Bridge via a chain of pedestrian spaces and links.

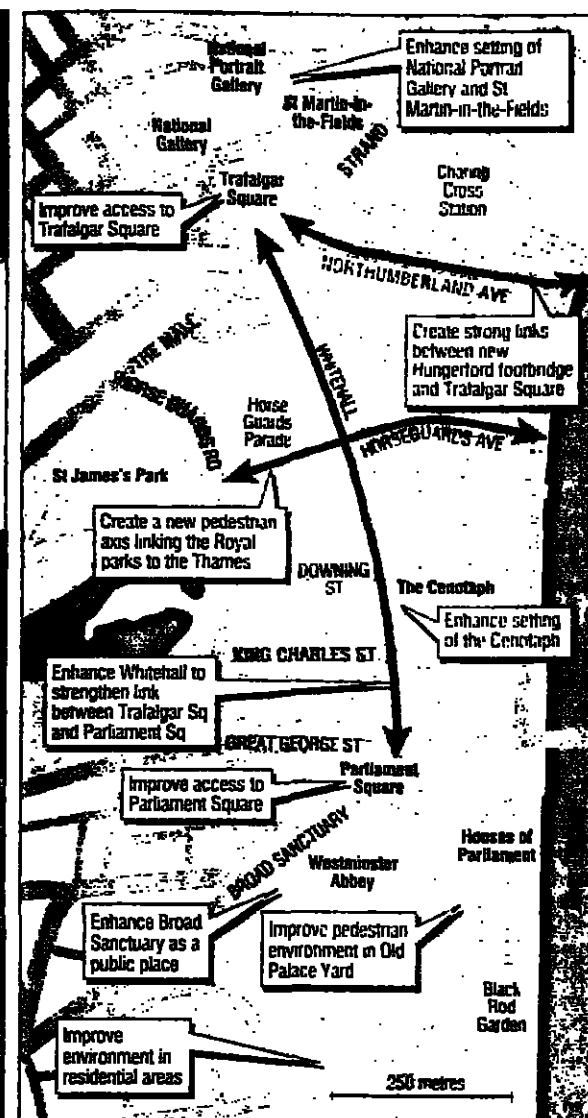
The project, funded to date by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£125,000), the private sector and the consultants (£125,000), is to be the subject of public consultation in June and July. A revised plan will be implemented soon after so that "substantial elements", according to Westminster City Council, "will become a reality by... 2000."

The consultants have produced options which include banishing traffic from nearly all of Trafalgar and Parliament Squares. Yesterday Sir Norman said at least a dozen major European cities had introduced pedestrianisation schemes on a similar scale. The costs of making the changes would range from a few million pounds to £20m at the most.

A visitor to the National Gallery today walks out on to a narrow strip of pavement separated from Trafalgar Square by a tide of fuming traffic and crazed cyclists. It is, by the standards of the world's great squares, a barren space dominated for most of the year by pigeons and, on New Year's Day, Scotsmen splashing in the fountains while Nelson on his column turns a blind eye. With Foster and Partners on board, Londoners can rest assured



How it might be: An impression (left) of what Parliament Square, with St Margaret's church and Westminster Abbey, could look like if the plan (right) is realised



Illustrations: Simon Jones/Kristina Ferris

Trafalgar Square, Horse Guards Parade and Parliament Square will not become "heritage" style pedestrian precincts.

The "World Squares for All" project is not aimed at transforming the heart of London into a pedestrian play-pen or a heritage theme-park. The scheme aims to improve the flow of public transport and taxis, improve safety and minimise the diversion of "any consequential increases in traffic congestion and pollution."

This does raise the question, which Foster and his fellow consultants have yet to tackle in any detail. If traffic is to be thur-

tled along these arterial roads, where will it go? Without a co-ordinated plan and without an enhanced London Transport in public hands, improvements to Trafalgar Square and environs will rob Peter to pay Paul.

Millennium plans for London need a degree of co-ordination that is impossible to achieve while life in the capital is increasingly subject to the uncertain laws of the market. Even so, the transformation of Trafalgar Square from a pigeon feeding area and an annual bath for Scotsmen into a great urban meeting-place can only be a step in the right direction.

World cities that square up to the new pedestrian age

Although many businessmen and council leaders have always claimed local economies suffer if cars and their wealthy passengers are excluded from parts of city centres, there is growing evidence that pedestrianisation can be financially beneficial. In cities across the world pedestrians are finally starting to win the battle with the car.

YORK: With its historic sites and traffic congestion, the centre of York was desperate for restrictions on the number of cars clogging its narrow streets. Pedestrian zones were introduced in 1987, and since then vehicles have been excluded from around the cathedral. In an area of seven major streets vehicles are excluded from 11am to 4pm during

weekdays and noon to 4pm on Sundays. York aims to be the first city in Britain to take control of traffic, rather than being controlled by it. By 1994, 20 per cent of all roads had been traffic-calmed, and on unpaved streets in the centre the speed limit is 20 mph. Accidents are down by two-thirds.

MILAN: Banning cars is relatively common in Italy, and to liberate the congested heart of Milan the authorities have pedestrianised streets and tried to improve the design of the area. To limit traffic chaos in the city centre, the authorities introduced a scheme where any vehicle entering the centre must have a permit. The permit, which has acquired the status of a winning lottery ticket, are given to all residents, a limited number

of employers and delivery vehicles within certain hours. Despite initial opposition to the scheme - court cases and protests - the local economy seems to have benefited and shops are reporting increased turnover.

BOSTON: Pedestrianisation is unusual among North American cities because the streets have evolved "organically", rather than along the typical grid and block structure. As well as improving bicycle routes and introducing traffic-calming measures, including the use of road humps and traffic islands, in Adelaide and Brisbane the authorities have also pedestrianised major streets with a resulting increase in turnover for the local economy.

Simon Reeve

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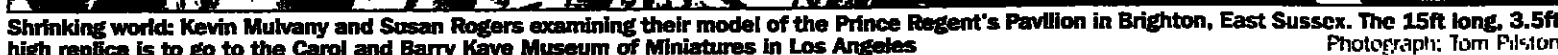
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Charles Arthur
Science Editor

But while increased vegeta-

Professor Cox said that while the data might seem like good news, the effects of global warming were unpredictable. "The problem is that although the

The dry spell is worrying farmers in the area and the next week will be "critical" for farmers who have just sown crops.



The Jamaican poet Olive Senior will be reading in Britain next week as part of the Commonwealth Festival of Literature, together with David Malouf, Mordecai Richler and Witi Ihimaera. The events take place at the Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff on 23 April at 8pm; at the Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre, Leeds University, on 25 April, 6pm; and at the Pegasus Theatre, Oxford on 26 April, 8pm. "Brief Lives" comes from Olive Senior's collection *Gardening in the Tropics* (Bloodaxe).

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THE INDEPENDENT election '97

Labour plays its health card

Christian Wolmar

Labour is moving onto its favoured home territory when it launches its campaign on the National Health Service this morning - recruiting Superman to help it with its cause.

While the timing had long been planned, Labour is delighted that it is playing its strongest card now when the Tories have already been badly weakened by their row over Europe.

A Labour source said last night: "We could not have hoped for a better time to move on to our agenda". He said Labour had a bigger lead on its competency to run the health service than on any other issue.

Labour will say there are "14 days to save the NHS" because the NHS would be unrecognisable by the end of a fifth Tory term which, the party claims, would lead to "piece by piece" privatisation and further use of internal markets creating more bureaucracy.

However, unlike previous election campaigns, Labour can no longer boast it will spend more than the Tories on the NHS. Instead it will focus on its greater efficiency at spending the money and at its plans to abolish the internal market and change the system for fund-holding GPs.

Last night, as a prelude to the campaign, three Labour front-benchers - John Prescott, Margaret Beckett and Chris Smith - spoke at Loughborough, a key target seat which has been deserted by Health

Secretary Stephen Dorrell.

Mrs Beckett cited the example of Christopher Reeve, the American actor who played Superman but who was paralysed in a riding accident and who has been expressing concern over whether he can afford his health bills. Mrs Beckett said he was "a man worth more than you or me, a man stricken down in the prime of life, a man who wonders openly what happens when the money runs out."

She argued that the NHS was one issue where there was "clear blue water" between Labour and the Tories, saying: "There is no ideal more great, no design more grand, no new direction needed more desperately than in Britain's need for a health service fit for a new millennium."

While trying to eschew any new promises about the NHS, Mrs Beckett raised some hostages to fortunes by saying that under the Tories people have had to wait 12 hours on a trolley for treatment and have had their operations cancelled three times because there is not enough staff. She also asked: "Will the local casualty department be closed or just too busy to admit your child in an emergency?"

Mr Prescott drew a picture of a semi-privatised health service: "When people come in they are asked: do you have private insurance? Who is your GP? If you have insurance or are registered with the right GP fundholder, you get priority. If not, you go to the back of the queue."

Row rages over opting-out leaflet

Lucy Ward
Education Correspondent

A row broke out yesterday over a newsletter urging parents of 75,000 children in opted-out schools to vote for pro-opting-out election candidates.

A leaflet produced by PASS, a group representing parents of children in grant-maintained schools, says only the Conservatives plan to retain GM status if re-elected, then asks readers to vote to ensure the schools remain unchanged.

PASS, also known as the Grant Maintained Schools Parents' Association, came under fire for "brazenly" encouraging parents to vote Conservative.

Local Schools Information, a pro-local authority schools ad-

visory body, also said heads and governors of GM schools could be breaking the law if they used pupils to distribute the newsletter.

PASS, which defines itself as a strictly non-political body, denied it was promoting one party and insisted it wanted parents to challenge all candidates over their views on opting out.

The PASS newsletter, called PassMark, is headlined "The vital choice you face about your child's future". It lists the achievements of grant-maintained schools, and claims they have failed only in getting all political parties to agree about them. "We are shortly to have a General Election and, sadly, the future of your child's school may be at stake."



Fawty phone-in: John Cleese loosening up with Liberal Democrat supporters yesterday Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

John Cleese proves Lib Dems are game for a laugh - inadvertently

Barrie Clement

John Cleese turned Church House into *Fawty Towers* yesterday, coming to the aid of his beloved Liberal Democrats in a somewhat flawed live "phone link" with converts to the cause.

The object of the exercise was a jocular trialogue between the comic, Paddy Ashdown and tame members of the electorate conducted at Church House in Westminster, live and under the glare of the media.

The problem was that some of the punters had not read the script. Neil Whimereah, from the key seat of Southport, was the first up. His phone rang for some time. "He's not in," said Mr Cleese. Eventually Mr

Whimereah answered. "Oh hello," he said as if surprised.

The man from Southport said he had been meaning to become a member of the party for some time and that he had voted for no one else. What was it about the political broadcast - by John Cleese - which had persuaded him to tie the political knot? "To be quite honest, nothing," came the reply.

Mr Cleese then asked him what he had written in an impassioned postcard to the Liberal Democrats. "Can't remember," Mr Ashdown prompted him that he had written on his concerns about the environment. "Did I?" was his reply.

The Liberal Democrats have always insisted that they wanted to inject a spot of fun into the election campaign, but was this what they had in mind?

Mr Ashdown kept reminding Mr Whimereah that the press was present. Members of the media seemed to be shaking uncontrollably during the phone link, apparently in mirth.

At one stage the increasingly tetchy Liberal Democrat leader chided the new member for failing to discern that he had taken over the telephone. "I thought I was still talking to John," said Mr Whimereah. "Surely you can tell the difference between our voices," said Mr Ashdown.

Then the untutored punter began to hold forth on unleaded petrol causing cancer. "Where did you get that from then?" said Mr Ashdown for whom the issue of carcinogenic fuel came out of the blue.

Margaret Heath, of Cumbria, was breathlessly supportive of the humorous approach espoused by the Liberal Democrats. "I think we should laugh at ourselves a bit more," she said.

Taking the conversation to a higher plain, Mr Cleese volunteered that he has once interviewed the Dalai Lama. "He said that when people laugh it loosens up their thinking."

"The former member of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* began to loosen up himself when Brin Dimnot, from Basingstoke, came on the line. "Is your name an anagram?" he teased. "It's genuine, it's me," came the reply.

Kissable Tony brings a little spice to town

John Walsh mingles with Blair's enthusiastic fans in Monmouth

Outside the Punch House, a charming ancient pub in cobbled Agincourt Square, the Monmouth Spice Girls were getting excited.

Kelly, Ceri, Michelle, Sheryl and Catherine had all shamelessly bunched off Maths at Monmouth's Comprehensive to clap eyes on Tony Blair.

"Why?" "cos he's sexy," ventured Sheryl. "I am going to vote Labour," said Kelly, who is 18 and a little madam, "because they're going to help the poor and do more for young people. The Conservatives just help rich people. This world needs a change," she ended ringingly. Someone wondered if the Labour boss would kiss the baby in the red straw hat. "I wish he'd kiss me," breathed Ceri (16 and a bit of a minx).

The kissable Tony was in Monmouth to support Huw Edwards, who lost to the Tories in 1992 by 3,200 votes. His rival, Roger Evans, (now Junior Minister for Social Security) swiftly became the day's pantomime villain. As Blair fans with placards surged outside the pub and the photographers mounted their familiar barricade, a dark blue Volvo purred up and down the street; from its dim interior Evans' plummy monotone taunted the crowd. "WHAT U-TURNS WILL LABOUR PERFORM NOW?" The car's loudspeaker rudely inquired. "ARE YOU ALLOWED TO ASK QUESTIONS OR IS THIS JUST ANOTHER PHOTO OPPORTUNITY?" The crowd booed, except for a trio of Tory ladies with blue rosettes and seats on the local council.

On the wall behind the snappers stood a statue of Henry V, who was born in Monmouth in 1387. Given his looming presence and the fact that we were in Agincourt Square, it was tempting to look for parallels: Mr Blair as Hal, super-patriot and God-sanctioned sovereign. Calling the Might of England to his side against the French? No, that won't do. John Prescott as Sir John Falstaff, hard-drinking embodiment of old values, now fallen on hard times? Ron Davies, the shadow Welsh secretary (who was there) as Fluellen? There

was, however, no need to look for an enemy to fight when you had Mr Evans ("WE SEEM TO BE WAITING AN EXTREMELY LONG TIME. I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT FOR. THREE CHEERS FOR JOHN MAJOR") volunteering for the part.

Tony and Cherie arrive, beaming and waving. Mrs Blair betrays no trace of nerves at these events, gaily telling a black low student "give me a call some time," when his minipupillage is over.

The baby in the straw hat (Molly Angharad Williams, 10 months) was preferred, but Tony declined to kiss her. He'd made a line speech this morning about the "seven killers of a decent society", full of unusually concrete notions, but its rightful place in the news headlines had been gobbled up by yet more tales of Tory disunity. He was clearly a little pissed off by this.

"MRFFWHWLLGG BAR-RAWHYLLGOGOGOGCH," intoned the unseen Mr Evans from further up the road. Either he was speaking in Welsh or his megaphone had been spin-doctored. "I'm delighted to see you, Mr Evans," said Blair, pleased to have even an incomprehensible heckler, "and I shall be even more delighted to wave you bye bye." Mr Evans hoots off back to his lair.

There's such an air of supremacy about the Labour leader now, all jutting chin and balled fists, you believe him capable of anything - going 10 rounds with Lennox Lewis, invading a neutral country. And perhaps it was the stone salute of Henry V over his head that inspired him to a peroration ("No more division... but a smooth unified one nation, a country that will look forward together with confidence. We can do it, for Britain, for Wales, for all our people").

Wild cheers. Two of the staff Spices were grilled about their views before Mr Blair sadly concluded, "you're not really very interested in politics, are you? Well, there's plenty of time." The girls turned to the crowd, adoration shining in their eyes. "That was cracking!" they said. And it was.

THE HURRIED VOTER'S GUIDE

THE CAMPAIGN

Overnight two junior ministers, John Horgan and James Paice, made statements against a European currency which breached the Cabinet's 'negotiate and decide' policy.

Both released pertinent statements saying they supported the Cabinet policy, but they had clearly had a dressing down from the Prime Minister. Mr Major told journalists the men had been "extremely unwise", but made it clear he would not sack them. He also announced that unemployment and the borrowing requirement had fallen, but the good news was largely ignored.

Earlier, Labour had launched its policy on environmental protection along with a five-point plan for a skills revolution. The party's environmental protection spokesman, Michael Meacher, made a rare appearance at its morning press conference to promise a task force to improve the environment, increase awareness of it and tackle youth unemployment. The response, again, was a barrage of questions on Europe.

The Liberal Democrats' press conference encountered similar problems attempting to highlight plans for a levy to stop water leakage. Later, Paddy Ashdown hosted a phone-out session to voters with John Cleese.

KEY ARGUMENTS

John Major made an impassioned plea, apparently to Euro-sceptics in his own party, on behalf of official Tory policy. He had been "scarred" by Britain's departure from the Exchange Rate Mechanism and would be cautious before taking the bigger step into a single currency, he argued. To take a firm line now on the issue would be "splendidly decisive. So to take a firm line now on the issue would be a British Prime Minister naked in splendidly decisive chamber with nothing to negotiate," he said.

Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, said the Prime Minister's statement "sounded like a rehearsal for his resignation speech. Everything he said seemed not to be directed at the immediate issues but at defining a place in history. But, the more he went on, the more he seemed like a man who has lost control of events."

Meanwhile Gillian Shepherd, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, was defending the validity of the latest unemployment figures, saying "more and more people are getting jobs and enjoying rising living standards. New Labour's policies, like the national minimum wage, would, as John Prescott rightly tells us, put millions of these jobs at risk."

GOOD DAY



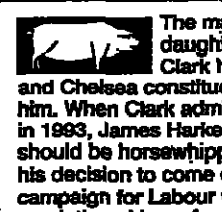
Martin Bell's nomination forms were accepted yesterday, after overcoming a challenge from Neil Hamilton, who questioned Mr Bell's right to stand under the 'Independent' banner. Apart from Mr Hamilton, Mr Bell will face eight other contenders in his Tatton constituency. They include the formidable Miss Moneyperny (of the Miss Moneyperny's Glamorous One Party).

BAD DAY



Yesterday was an appalling day for John Major, who had to re-think his campaign strategy following the outbreak of fighting within the Government over Europe. Mr Major used the morning press conference to make an impassioned plea to Euro-sceptics to toe the party line. He then decided hastily to re-shoot last night's election broadcast to focus on Europe, rather than on optimistic economic news.

HOGWASH



The man whose wife and two step-daughters were seduced by Alan Clark has arrived in the Kensington and Chelsea constituency to campaign against him. When Clark admitted the affairs in his *Diaries* in 1993, James Harkness said the former minister should be horsewhipped. Today he insisted that his decision to come over from South Africa and campaign for Labour was "nothing to do with any vendetta... I have forgiven Alan Clark."

THE OTHER PARTIES

Sinn Féin's senior spokesman Mitchell McLaughlin insisted that a vote for the party was not a vote for the IRA. He said that he knew nothing of speculation that the IRA might call a ceasefire before the election. "If it happens, it happens," he said. "These are matters for the IRA - and outside the control of Sinn Féin." Meanwhile, the Scottish National Party announced that they were launching a fresh attack on Labour, unleashing a Scottish and two Westie terriers to take on Labour's bulldog. "With our wee Scottie dogs we are biting back," they declared.

MEDIA STAR



Baroness Thatcher continued to polish her legacy, visiting the now prosperous Tesdale Park in Cleveland. Ten years ago *The Independent* photographed her striding across the derelict site, before waving it would be regenerated. Yesterday she unveiled a plaque bearing words spoken on her previous visit.

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Number of women MPs set to double

Louise Jury

There could be nearly twice as many women MPs in Parliament after the election, according to figures released last night by the Fawcett Society.

As nominations for 1 May closed, nearly 400 women were contesting seats in the election. Of those, the society believes 111 are standing in safe constituencies or where a swing of

less than eight per cent would secure them victory. This result would transform the Commons where there were 62 women members last time.

Women would make up around 17 per cent of the Commons compared with 9.2 per cent of the representation during the last session.

Even with a six per cent swing, the magic 100 mark would be breached for the first

time. Mary Ann Stephenson, of the Fawcett Society, said: "I think that creates a critical mass which is important. One of the problems a lot of women MPs have is they need to show they can cut it as well as the men."

"Once we get more women in, it will be easier for them to address issues which are not seen as serious political issues at the moment, like how we deal with childcare."

She said the vast majority of women were in unwinnable seats. Although all parties had trumpeted the number of female candidates they were fielding, what mattered was whether they were likely to get elected.

On an eight per cent swing, Labour will have 92 women compared with 54 at present and the Tories 15 after the election. This would represent a smaller female presence on

the Conservative benches as there were 25 women in the last Parliament.

Ten Tory women defending candidates are fighting safe seats. Seventeen female Labour defending candidates have safe seats and another eight of its new candidates look virtually certain to win.

None of the Liberal Democrat women MPs has a safe seat - defined by the Fawcett Soci-

ety as where the contesting party needs more than an eight per cent swing - although Kay Michie in Argyll and Bute is thought likely to be returned.

All seven Plaid Cymru women candidates are fighting in constituencies where they need a swing of more than 25 per cent to get elected. The society believes two Scottish National Party will have two women after the election - defending candidates

Margaret Ewing and Roseanna Cunningham.

Ms Stephenson said: "It will be important that a number of women are all entering at the same time. If there is a huge chunk of women all new together, it will be easier to back each other up."

A Labour Party spokesman said they had 90 target seats and women candidates in exactly half - as they had hoped to

achieve under the controversial all-women shortlists procedure which was ruled illegal.

Up to 5,000 people are expected to contest the general election compared with just under 3,000 candidates in 1992. In addition to candidates for the main parties, pro-life campaigners, the Natural Law Party and the Referendum Party will be standing in many constituencies.



Teesside revisited: Baroness Thatcher goes on a walkabout with John and Norma Major (Photograph: Carl Rutherford). Right: Ten years ago the area was derelict scrubland

Thatcher goes back to the wilderness

Peter Popham

The theme of Baroness Thatcher's walkabout in Teesside yesterday was practically Biblical. The desert seeded, sprouting multiplex cinemas, fitness centres, marinas, bingo halls and universities.

Nearly 10 years ago, Margaret Thatcher strode, face clamped in a frown, across the rubble and scrub of Teesside's urban dereliction. Yesterday she returned to the site - where once dandelions blew about and the unlawfully tipped rubbish festered, rows of two, red brick, gable-ended Eighties-style buildings have sprung up.

The Teesside Development Corporation site, claimed to be the biggest redevelopment site

in Europe, is Lady Thatcher's promise redeemed. "This is where I stood 10 years ago," she said as if remembering vividly. "It's been transformed! Totally transformed!"

As an attempt to draw the press pack's attention away from ministerial dissent on Europe, it was a bold one - and almost selfless on Lady Thatcher's part, given her own passionate hostility to Europe.

There was a half-hearted attempt at the start of the day to keep her involvement in the proceedings secret. At the morning press conference, John Major said coyly: "I have to catch a plane to go to Teesside for something I hope you will find more than usually interesting." The truth, however, was out of the bag almost at

once, chased vainly by Tory press officers. "I'm telling you that we are not allowed to give a definite confirmation for security reasons," one said. "Her people will pull her."

Lady Thatcher remained unperturbed, however, and the event billed as "Lady Thatcher's Walk In The Wilderness, now a walk in the Teesside Development Corporation" went ahead as scheduled. For Teesside is an important, indeed a desperate, Tory front line.

To the north is the Lake of Red, which covers all of industrial Tyne and Tees, including the constituencies of Peter Mandelson (Hartlepool) and Tony Blair (Sedgefield). To the south are the very different realities of rural North Yorkshire. Teesside was decimated in the recession

of the early Eighties. When I visited Hartlepool, one of the bleakest spots in the region, five years ago, it was noted principally for monstrous unemployment and hard drinking.

However, Teesside is visibly a changed place and the development corporation set up after Mrs Thatcher's visit (and due to be wound up later this year) demands much of the credit.

With the media penned behind industrial-strength barriers, a BBC helicopter circling overhead and a cavalcade of Range-Rovers and Jaguars, it was a visitation worthy of a living legend - only slightly spoiled by a *Mirror* van trucking back and forth on a nearby road pumping out the Labour campaign song.

It was, in fact, a painfully artificial event: the Prime Minister, and the former prime minister, padding down the road smiling, waving, pressing local Tory flesh. They then unveiled a plaque and shovelled some dirt over an already planted and blossoming cherry tree.

Lady Thatcher was mute as she has never been mute before. Besides gasping over the transformation her walkabout had set in train, and waving to invisible crowds hovering in the air, her part was a walk-on.

"Mr Major, why don't you sack these foolish ministers?" one reporter asked repeatedly as Lady Thatcher stood, lips pursed, by his side. "Lady Thatcher would have sacked them!" Mr Major mustered an old-fashioned look - as if to say, "try that once more and she'll bite your ear off."



by Aanonymous

It was 7.30am. Last night the BT engineer had patched a conference line into the large suite of the south coast hotel. So now the Candidate and Big Al waited for the call from headquarters. Through the hall leading to the suite's living room (virtually indistinguishable from her own at home), Mrs Candidate could be heard talking gently on another line to each of her children in turn.

Back in the bedroom, newspapers lay scattered on the bed, the floor and most of the chairs; the headlines all agreeing that the Grey Man was in deep and terrible trouble.

The electronic box on the coffee table coughed. Big Al lent forward, pressed a button and said, "Okay, we're on," into it. "Good morning!" said friend Bobby from 60 miles away, his soft voice sounding like damp sand slipping

down a child's slide, "and what a lovely morning it is!" Al smiled at the Candidate. The press stories of Bobby and the bull dog, plus the accompanying photographs of the spare, sharp-suited strategist rolling on the floor with a baggy pooch, had been camp classics. Last night they had been speculating that Bobby might hang on to the animal beyond the election, and come to the dispatch box with it in tow - company for Bling Lemon Blunkett's guide dog.

"Morning, Bobby!" replied the Candidate grinning. "Is Mr Brown with you?" "Yes, I'm here," came a Scott's accented basso profundo - a voice of rich (if gloomy) colour. "We live in interesting times."

The Candidate went on, "Al is sure that we should feed some comment on the Grey Man's predicament into this morning's speech." There were disembodied noises of assent down the line from London: one gruff, the other sibilant. "I just thought we should talk through our responses."

"The main thing is that we let them stew as much as possible in their own juices," said Bobby smoothly. "We just get on erecting our seven pillars and whatever - and keep to our splendid plan. When asked we sigh, and make clear how pathetic they are, how totally unfitted to govern etc. As far as I can see the big casualty in all this is their negative campaign: it's much harder for them to suggest what a dan-



gerous bunch we are when they are squabbling like this. The only peril we have to be on guard for is that they might push it so far, that they actually come out the other side a genuinely anti-European party. That could - as we've always known - be a problem for us. As we also know, that depends on whether Bloke goes quickly, or decides - as the most successful Tory chancellor in history - to make a fuss.

"Right," said the Candidate. "What differentiates us from them is that they're a rabble led by a weed, and we're a purposive party led by... me. We're just as patriotic as them, but we're in the best position to defend British interests, because we're united."

Someone groaned a small, barely audible groan. It was Mr Brown. There followed a short silence which he then broke, his voice hitting such low registers that his listeners strained to catch his words. "I just want to express a worry. Whenever we get a row like this inside the other party, the European argument goes by default."

He warned to his theme. "All you then hear is the sound of politicians falling over one another to tell the country how anti-European they are. And we, of course, have to respond. Look what's already happened. In a few months we've moved from being in principle in favour of monetary union: then in favour, but with a referendum; then doubtful about the first wave; then doubtful in the lifetime of the next Parliament. But if the bloody thing happens - and I still think it will - are we going to have painted ourselves so far into a corner that we can't join even if we want to?"

The Candidate sighed. The truth was that no one could see into the future. But unlike Mr Brown he could envisage life outside a single currency, if that was what the British people - his people - really wanted. Their attitudes were also a reality: in political terms they were concrete. "Good point," he replied. "If it's in Britain's interests we will go for it. That's the test, rather than something abstract. Britain's interests!"

"And where would that have left us in 1938?" muttered Mr Brown. But by that time the line had gone dead.

There's not enough vision in Blair's New Labour



How will you vote?
Labour

Why?

I've been a lifelong Labour supporter, so of course I'm pleased that we are probably on the verge of a Labour victory. I've waited too long for a change of government. And yet I'm uneasy. I don't think a Labour government is going to solve all our problems. The flaws of British society are far too fundamental. This is partly because the public's perception of politicians is so low: the knock-on effect of the recent scandals mean that politicians,

regardless of party, appear as tainted as each other. This results in a distressing level of apathy.

People think things are going to get instantly better; that the gap between the haves and the have-nots will be bridged. But this is not quite the case. I think change will happen, but it will be gradual. I believe that the British public are inherently conservative. But I believe that a positive attitude towards our society means having a socialist attitude.

What issues are important to you?

HOW I WILL VOTE: ART MALIK

We all want, and deserve, a Utopia for our future generations. If we go by what the manifestos are saying, education is the number one priority. It is vital that we educate the next generation properly, and that they are brought up with the support of a good National Health Service. But I don't think there is enough a vision to Tony Blair's New Labour for the inequalities in society, in education and health services, to be corrected, in the short term at least.

I'm in favour of rethinking the constitutional system and the possibilities of Proportional Representation. After all, the last government was voted in by only approximately 40 per cent of the vote. But the entire system needs to be fundamentally rethought. The voting system seems an anachronism. When your MP hears the division bell after staying up in a bar for the vote, he is goaded, probably drunk, into the lobby, chosen by a select few leading the party.

Would you consider voting Liberal Democrat?

Under the boundary changes since the last election, I now live in the borough of Richmond. Dick Tracey is my MP, and in this staunch Conservative constituency, voting for Labour is a bit like pissing in the wind. With the Liberal Democrats firmly in second place, it would be better to vote for them to make sure that the seat did not go back to the Conservatives. But I've been committed to socialism and the Labour Party for too long to not be behind them on a national basis and see them through this election.

This encapsulates my problem with the voting system and this campaign in particular. Does it really matter how I vote at all? After all, the important thing is not how you vote, but what happens after.

Are there any politicians you admire?

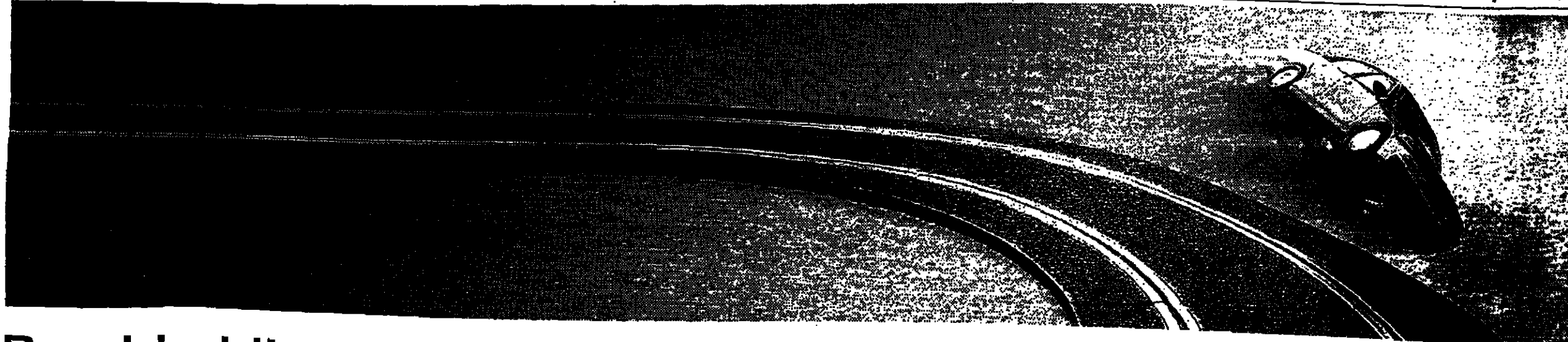
I cannot think of any politician alive who I really admire. They all lack an overall vision, unlike people like Gandhi who I greatly respect. Tony Blair may claim he has a vision but I simply don't believe it. Whilst reading last week's reports of each parties' manifestos, I simply

couldn't see an overall structure to any of them. All we get is the work of the spin doctors with their soundbites.

When did you first become interested in politics?

When I was about 14, living in the Tory heartland of Wandsworth. I got involved with Geoffrey Robinson, who lived just over the road and was my friend's elder brother. It was the end of the Sixties and we were faced with a country in a terrible state - the miners' striking, the three-day working week, the National Front.

Interview by Sam Coates



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election '97

Jobs news fails to deflect Euro row

Diane Coyle and Fran Abrams

The economic news favoured the Conservatives once again. Government borrowing last year was well below the Budget target, while last month brought another big drop in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit, according to official figures.

The jobs figures reflected the booming economy. The headline unemployment rate fell to 6.1 per cent, the lowest for six years. Employment climbed by 135,000 in the three months to February, with just over half of it full-time.

More women are in work than ever before, now accounting for more than two-fifths of the workforce. But male participation in work has continued to decline.

Paul Gregg, a researcher at the London School of Economics, said: "Women will overtake men in the early years of the next century. We will have a female-dominated labour force overseen by male managers."

The latest fall in unemployment figures was at the centre of a dispute yesterday after opposition parties claimed a government report showed that large sections of the population were being left out of its calculations. As official figures recorded the number of people out of work falling by 41,100 to 1,707,000 last month, Labour and the Liberal Democrats said many young people, women and older men had been excluded.

The Prime Minister had clearly hoped that the optimistic figures would divert attention from the row over Europe. However, the news attracted so little attention at yesterday's 'Tory party' news

briefing that he had to ask repeatedly whether anyone wanted to question him on it.

When he was finally asked about unemployment, the emphasis was on the dispute over how the figures were compiled. In its application for European Social Fund grants to tackle long-term unemployment last December, the Government suggested that levels among young people, women and older men were understated in its official figures. Those seeking work but not immediately available were also excluded.

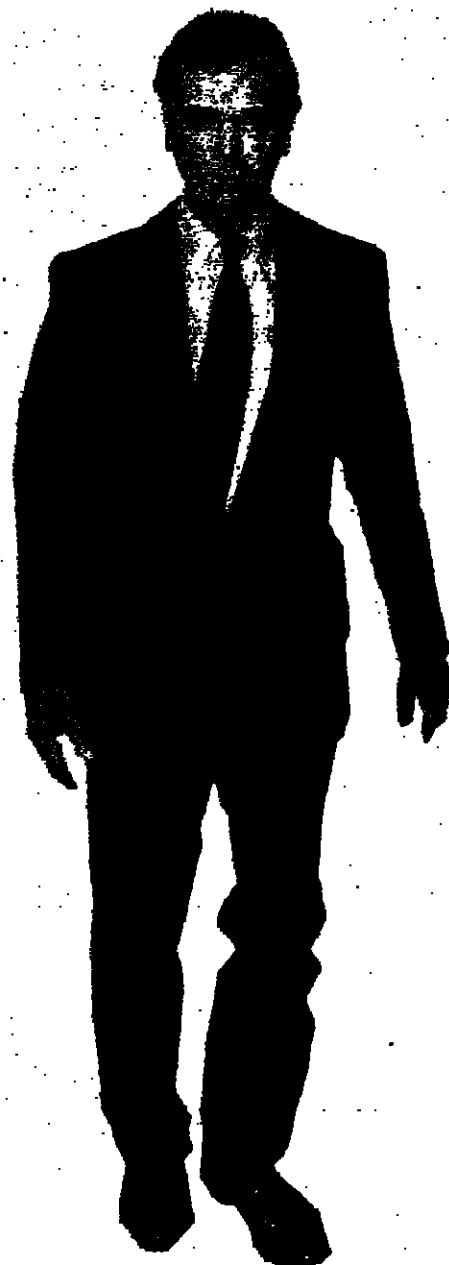
Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, said countries were allowed to submit claimant figures plus information on other measures such as disability. Labour's treasury spokesman, Alistair Darling, said the remark amounted to an admission that the government's figures did not tell the whole story.

"The Government should now come clean and admit in public what they are saying in private, that the claimant count does not reflect the real level of unemployment," he said.

Don Foster, the Liberal Democrat employment spokesman, said that in addition to those who were out of work but off the figures, there were also many people on low pay, short-term contracts or in insecure jobs.

Kenneth Clarke seized on the gap between spending and revenues was £22.8bn, £3.6bn below his target for 1996/97. The Chancellor said this was "evidence of the healthy state of Britain's public finances".

The figures were better than forecast thanks to below-target spending and higher tax revenues. The sale of the Ministry of Defence married quarters and the student loan book trimmed £1.4bn from expenditure.



Family values: James Harkess (right) says he has forgiven Alan Clark (left) for having affairs with his wife Valerie and step-daughters Josephine (above) and Alison, but is disgusted with the Tory party and has flown from South Africa to help Labour in Kensington and Chelsea. Photograph: London News Service



Husband on moral mission against Clark

Harkess joins Labour on Kensington doorsteps, reports Clare Garner

The coven has come back to haunt Alan Clark. His campaign to win safe Kensington and Chelsea in west London may not be the comfortable ride he was hoping for.

James Harkess, whose wife and two step-daughters were seduced by the former defence minister, is on a "moral mission" to canvass for Mr Clark's Labour opponent.

Mr Harkess, a barrister and former judge, has flown half way round the world to campaign on behalf of Robert Atkinson, the Labour Party candidate in Kensington and Chelsea. He is, he says, sick of "Tory sleaze".

The last time Mr Harkess came to Britain from his home in South Africa was in May 1994 when he told the *News of the World* that Mr Clark deserved to be "horsewhipped" for having a simultaneous affair with his wife and her daughters Alison, 39, and Josephine, 37. In his memoirs, Mr Clark described the three women as the "coven".

This time he is spreading his message door-to-door. He has already been out canvassing with 91-year-old Lord Longford and intends to join Mr Atkinson regularly in the run-up to the general election. His wife, Valerie, 59, was due to join him in Britain yesterday.

"Clark is a man unsuitable for politics," said Mr Harkess. "It's his dishonesty as well as his sexual peccadilloes," he added. "I think I should be able to say what I believe and try to stop that which is ugly, dishonest and wrong."

Although he briefly supported the Labour Party as a teenager, Mr Harkess, 67, has otherwise been a lifelong Tory. He even stood as a Conservative candidate for Brixton in south London in the 1970 election, declaring himself a supporter of Enoch Powell's position on immigration.

Mr Harkess denies that he is wreaking revenge on his old rival. "This is nothing to do with any vendetta or anything of that kind," he said. "I don't believe in vendettas. I have forgiven Alan Clark."

He added: "That doesn't mean that I don't have a right and a duty like everyone else to say what I think is right and what I think is wrong. And one of the things I think is very right - and I want to be positive not negative - is what Tony Blair is doing in the next two weeks in order to become Prime Minister of this country."

He is, he says, disgusted with the Conservative Party. "It's the whole question of trust, honesty and leadership, and of course, moral and family values," he said, claiming there were about 30 Conservatives who "could be labelled sleaze candidates".

"What is bringing the election down is that there is too much sleaze going on in the Conservative Party," he said. "There is something very wrong with the state of the country when the Prime Minister cannot do anything about that and put it right."

Mr Clark said yesterday: "He [Harkess] says he has forgiven me. Well, that's very generous of him and very Christian of him. I have expressed contrition the last time this was raised four years ago and the episode is 20 years old."

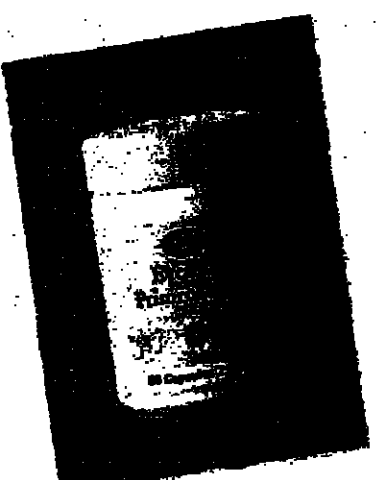
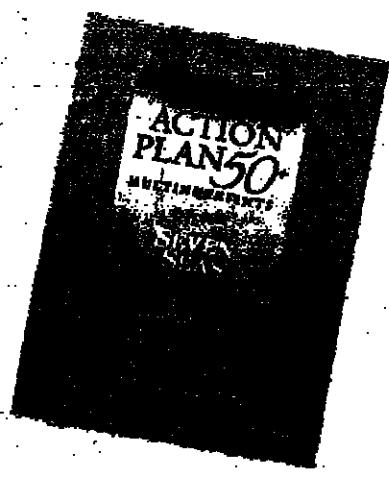
"I don't like talking about it. It's very, very old. It really is historic and I am trying to fight an election now."

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Blair sets out basics for a Labour Britain

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Tony Blair yesterday offered to create a decent society founded on "the seven pillars of security", the basic building blocks of Labour policy.

In a lecture in Southampton, the Labour leader deliberately set out his positive policy stall, as an alternative to the personal attacks and negative campaigning of the Tories.

But that did not stop him contrasting the political stances of the two parties – and portraying the Conservatives in a highly negative light.

"After 18 years of Conservative government," he said, "Britain is more divided and less equal than at any time since the war."

"It will be a new Labour government's task to rebuild Britain as one nation, where every individual has a stake in its future, where we treat poverty and unemployment not as

problems we shut out or ignore, but as intolerable in any decent society true to the best of British values."

"The Conservatives say: choose between self-interest and the good of society. I say any sensible view of self-interest recognises that the stronger, more unified a society is, the better for the individuals within it."

"More than that, we cannot confront and overcome the problems of health, schools, action on unemployment, security in old age – as well as new problems like environmental degradation – unless we face the challenges together."

"This is the case for collective action: Britain cannot be one nation unless it is prepared to act as one nation."

"As leader of the Labour Party I have made it my goal to create a decent society based on security for all in a world of change."

"It is that decent society that the Tories are incapable of cre-

ating. They believe number one comes first in all things."

"They believe inequality is a sign of success. They see insecurity as the only spur to activity. So they denigrate the things that we hold in common – the health service, the basic pension, public education."

Mr Blair said that a few at the top were well-off and secure, but there was an insecure majority and a large and anxious group in the middle.

If the election was to be fought on the Conservative record, and on what they offered, people would be appalled and terrified."

Terrified at their abolition of the state pension; terrified at their plans to strangle the health service; terrified at the prospect of a growing Tory 'underclass'; terrified at the idea of four out of five schools being turned into secondary moderns; terrified at the idea that Britain cannot be better than this."

The Labour leader said he

was offering, instead, "seven pillars of security in a world of change: A world class education system; a modern, comprehensive NHS with the peace of mind that comes from knowing it will be there when you need it; security and dignity in retirement; freedom from the fear of crime and security in our communities; quality housing; a welfare state that promotes independence; and strong social institutions – from the family upwards – that promote mutual responsibility and a spirit of public and voluntary service."

He concluded: "Together, you and I will begin to build the new society, a society in which each of us has the chance to grow, to achieve, to contribute, to create dignity for ourselves, and not for ourselves alone, but for others also; a society in which each of us has a stake, a share; and we will give back to our children what they deserve – a heritage of hope."

Bell beats off last ditch bid by Hamilton to stop him

Jojo Moyes

The battle for the hearts and ballot slips of Totton's voters took another bad-tempered twist yesterday when the Tory candidate Neil Hamilton launched a last-ditch attempt to scupper the electoral chances of his rival, Martin Bell, by lodging an objection over Mr Bell's use of the word "independent".

Along with nine other candidates, Mr Bell had his nomination formally accepted yesterday, describing himself as an Independent. He had planned to describe himself as "Independent Anti-Corruption", but withdrew the words "anti-corruption" following the threat of legal action.

Speaking after his nomination was accepted, Mr Bell, who was proposed by former Tory councillor Laurence Hobday, said that his title was

irrelevant. "I'm standing as an Independent, but everyone knows it's on an anti-corruption platform."

As he formally launched his election campaign with a walk-about in Alderley Edge, in Cheshire, he revealed that he was also being supported by two former mayors, one Labour and one Liberal Democrat, two war veterans and an England cricketer. "He's going to teach me to deal with the bouncers that may be coming my way," Mr Bell said.

The first came just hours later, with the news that Mr Hamilton's agent had launched a formal objection to Mr Bell's description of himself as Independent.

"Bell is not an independent candidate. He is a stooge of the Labour Party with Liberal support," Mr Hamilton said. "I call on him to withdraw his nomi-

nation papers and allow Totton's voters a real choice between political parties."

But the acting returning officer, chief executive of Maclefield Borough Council, Brian Longden, rejected the complaint by Mr Hamilton, the former minister at the centre of the cash-for-questions row. A spokesman said: "The acting returning officer has replied to say he cannot accept the objection as valid. Martin Bell's nomination is valid."

Mr Bell described the attempt as "a desperate effort by a desperate man". "I was nominated by a Conservative councillor ... so Mr Hamilton cannot claim that my nomination was anything other than totally cross-party," he said.

As the list of candidates was closed at 4 pm yesterday, there initially appeared to have been another twist, with the de-

scription of candidate Simon Kinsley as an "Independent Conservative".

But just half an hour later, a rather embarrassed spokesman for the council admitted that the description had been a mistake, and that the candidate was, in fact, simply Independent.

Other candidates standing in Totton are: David Laurence Bishop, Lord Byro v The Scallywag Tories Party; Sam Hill, Independent candidate; Michael Paul Kennedy, Natural Law Party; Simon Lowther Kinsey, Independent candidate; John Richard Muir, Albion Party; Ralph Nicholas, Independent candidate; Burnel Craig Penhaul, commonly known as Miss Money Penny the Transformer Miss Money Penny's Glamorous One Party; and Julian Matthew Price, Juice Party.



Busy days: Tim Devlin trying to catch votes, and an escaped dog Photograph: Tom Pilsto

Teesside seat could spring a surprise

Tim Devlin is mildly displeased. A local bookmaker has just made him the narrow favourite to hold on to his marginal seat of Stockton South, a rare Tory foothold in the North-east.

"I think I prefer it when people are doing me down as the underdog," explained Mr Devlin, busy door-knocking in a key ward. But it is not unexpected. "I suppose I have a track record for surprising results."

Clinging on to his majority of 3,369 would certainly be surprising. The Teesside constituency is one of 90 "must win" seats for Labour, and at 64th on the list and according to form and party analysis, a win here would give Tony Blair's party a small overall majority.

Mr Devlin, whose narrow trend-bucking ousting of the Social Democrats' Ian Wrigglesworth in 1987 made him the youngest Tory MP at 27, is undaunted. Cheerily shaking the hand of each voter who crossed his path, the former barrister seemed remarkably relaxed about being written off as a Tory loss as he shepherded his canvassing team around the houses. "We have heard it all before and we have fought back."

His campaign themes are notably local issues. He claims that even Labour voters regard him as an approachable MP and points to his encouragement of the use of closed-circuit television and "zero tolerance" policing which has cut crime in the area.

Traditional Labour voters, he believes, are unhappy with Mr

Michael Streeter reports from a Tory enclave in Labour's target territory

Blair's new Labour and he thinks their abstentions could help him win. With his wife, Carol, he gleefully recalls the reaction of Labour voters on the doorstep. "One person said, 'I've been waiting 18 years to get rid of you effing us, now I find the other effing us are just the same'."

Much of the chat in the crowded terrace house that is the election headquarters is light-hearted and domestic – of their two dogs and the lamb on their six-acre smallholding. The property fits well with the southern part of the constituency where pretty towns such as Yarm show signs of considerable wealth. In contrast, some areas of the decaying industrial Stockton suffer male unemployment of up to 30 per cent and massive deprivation.

So far his campaign against Labour's David Taylor has been relatively civil, though he informed *The Independent* that Ms Taylor had been "parachuted" in by her party, and had been given a new Labour "makeover". He declared: "She has a new hairdo and wears suits."

His own career is not without criticism. In 1994 he was removed as a ministerial aide, claiming that he left because of local defence cuts. Whips said he was sacked for "general ineffectiveness", although a year

later he was given a similar post.

Ms Taylor dismisses the personal criticism of her as "silly" but recognises that she has a real fight ahead to take the seat. She accepts that many of the undecided voters – around 25 per cent of the electorate – will fall back to the Tories, but she is confident that enough will switch or stay at home to give her the 3.9 per cent swing she needs to win.

There is everything to play for and this is a critical seat. All eyes will be on us [at the election]. The daughter of the former Labour MP for Burnley, Daniel Jones, Welsh-born Ms Taylor – whose campaign is sponsored by the GMB general workers' union – detects a mood of anticipation in the seat. But she concedes that trust in all politicians to carry out their promises is low. "People won't change, I know that. We are going to have to prove that they can trust us. Winning the election is going to be the easy part."

Already she feels that she has Mr Devlin on the run over schools' funding and a controversial plan to build a watersports centre on a tranquil spot on the Tees, to which Mr Devlin appeared to give initial backing.

The Liberal Democrats also believe they see signs of movement to them by both disenchanted Tories and "betrayed" Labour supporters. However, most observers believe their candidate, Peter Monck, who works for a funeral company, will do well to maintain their 1992 vote of less than 10,000.

MEDIA WATCH Jobless ousted in favour of single Euro currency

Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

The Conservative Party's election broadcast schedule was scrapped yesterday so that the Prime Minister could deal with the splits on Europe that are damaging the party.

A film made by the Tories' advertising agency, M&C Saatchi, about the economy and falling unemployment, was due to be broadcast last night to coincide with yesterday's release of the latest unemployment figures.

Instead Mr Major decided to record a personal message on camera to explain his "wait and see" policy on Britain's entry to a single European currency.

The film was made in less than an hour in the party's London headquarters by a film crew from M&C Saatchi.

The message was a version of the impassioned statement Mr Major made to journalists earlier at the party's morning press conference.

Aides claimed the fired-up Prime Minister recorded the address in one take, unrehearsed and without the benefit of notes. The five minute film is likely to have cost the party much less than the £250,000 spent on its famous "Return to Brixton" film in 1992.

It is not known if the party will re-schedule the film on unemployment.

The Tories are estimated to have spent £2m making five election broadcasts during the 1992 general election. Labour, which uses volunteer directors as well as professionals at its advertising agency BMP DDB, is likely to spend around £200,000 on its five films for this campaign.

Making the new broadcast delayed the Prime Minister's trip to Stockton-on-Tees to meet Baroness Thatcher for a photo opportunity.

The *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* are trying to create an alternative election platform for the Conservative Party based on opposition to a European single currency.

Tuesday's *Mail* used John Major's visit to disgruntled fishermen in Newlyn as a hook to declare a "Battle for Britain" on its front page. Inside the newspaper published photographs and names of 76 Tory candidates opposed to a single currency. It also published a "Battle for Britain Hotline" number for candidates to fax through their election addresses.

The *Mail's* first and second editions yesterday, when ministers John Horgan and James Paice were unearthen as opposing government policy, illuminated its attitude to the issue. The *Mail* believes it does the Tories more good to be seen as anti-EU than harm to be seen as divided on the issue.

It scrapped its early front page story about trade unions – "Labour's bully boys are back" – in favour of "Europe: The great revolt". Inside it printed another 66 photographs of Tory dissenters and a list of 140 candidates who now oppose the single currency.

The *Telegraph* must have felt suitably mollified. It started writing to Tory candidates at the end of last week to ask for their election addresses. Only yesterday did it manage to print the positions of 117 candidates whose election addresses it had received. Only 52 of the *Telegraph's* candidates were explicitly opposed to the single currency, but even without the inducement of a photograph, more addresses were being received by the newspaper last night.

It says something about the management of the Conservative Party at the present time that people like me are forced into this position. I hope this embarrasses them. They should feel ashamed – Former Tory treasurer Lord McAlpine, protesting against the closure of Bart's Hospital outside Conservative Central Office.

"He is dead and wooden ... Maggie will find it incredibly difficult to keep quiet on this" – Lord McAlpine

QUOTES OF THE DAY

on John Major's 'wait and see' policy

"It was perfectly clear, that when the unity of silence had been shattered ... that the people would wake up and would no longer tolerate the lies that were being told to them" – Sir James Goldsmith on

Conservative Euro-splits

"We will see how they handle but the new ones are lighter and easier, especially for female staff ... we are keeping our old polling booths even though one does have a bit of graffiti saying 'Vote Chamberlain'."

– Devon Electoral Officer Peter Smith on the new plastic ballot boxes.

"Do you know what the essence of this is? It is the genius of John Major who has kept these options open" – Michael Heseltine

on the Conservative European currency debate

"It's no good trotting out the bulldogs if you are going to be a French poodle" – Michael Forsyth

"It would be interesting to know what Lady Thatcher's election address would say if she were still publishing one."

– Labour Party campaign spokesman Brian Wilson

Compiled by Ben Summers

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No lasting rest for lost victim of Korean war

Seoul — It should have been a historic and emotional occasion. On St George's Day next week, British veterans from the Korean War were to have gathered at the Commonwealth war cemetery in Pusan to lay to rest one of their fallen comrades. For nearly half a century he had lain unknown and unburied in foreign soil. Then a remarkable and unexpected thing happened. In 1995, 42 years after the war ended, he became the first British serviceman to be handed over by the Stalinist government of North Korea, perhaps the most reclusive regime in the world.

Richard Lloyd Parry on the row delaying the burial of a British soldier

British officials spent months in tricky negotiations with the North Korean People's Army across the demilitarised zone which still divides the peninsula. But yesterday, with the funeral about to be sent out from the British embassy in Seoul, the funeral was cancelled, not because of North Korean obstruction, but because the American Department of Defense is refusing to hand over his remains.

Officials in London insist there are no hard feelings. But British diplomats in Seoul privately are annoyed about the last-minute collapse of what should have been a proud, symbolic and resonant moment.

This morning, 100 veterans and their families will arrive in Seoul, accompanied by the Duke of Gloucester, for a week of commemorations for the 1,100 British servicemen who died during the three-year Korean conflict. On Sunday, the dead man's widow and his son, born after his death, were to have flown out to join the party. But next Wednesday, as the veterans travel from Seoul to Pusan, the British remains will stay locked in storage in a Pentagon laboratory in Hawaii. Despite the presence of identifying "dog tags", US scientists insist they do not know who the dead man is and will not release the body.

At the heart of the disagreement are deep differences between the way Britain and the United States regard their war dead. America repatriates all the bodies it can locate and

makes strenuous efforts to identify them. Until the Falklands War in 1982, British policy was to let the dead "lie where they fall".

After the Korean War ended, unknown numbers of dead servicemen were left in North Korean territory. In 1990 the North began returning American remains, which were duly sent to the Pentagon's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHAI). When North Korea handed over the first British body in October 1995, it was also sent to CILHAI, with accompanying dog tags.

Recently the answer came back: the body could not be identified with confidence and would not be released for next week's funeral.

"It's been British practice to take dog tags as empirical evidence," says a British officer involved with the case. "At Ypres, when they were pulling corpses out of the mud, that was often the best you could do."

For the scientists in CILHAI this is not enough. They need absolute proof of identity, which means DNA



Baring the brunt: Soldiers of the Black Watch regiment marching to the wash house during their tour of duty in the Korean War

Photograph: AP

samples. "They were literally asking us for locks of hair, even envelopes that he might have licked, which might still carry his DNA," says a British diplomat.

But the scientists failed to make a match, just as they have failed to make a match in almost every case they have dealt with. Of the 210 sets of US remains sent to the lab from North Korea since 1990, only six have been positively identified.

The Americans say dog tags prove nothing. "The tags tell you that in all probability the person who once carried them is dead," says Jim Coles III, spokesman for US Forces Korea.

"But just because you have a set of remains and a set of dog tags doesn't prove that they once belonged to the same person."

For North Koreans, whose economy has now collapsed, there is an incentive to produce remains: since

1990 they have been paid \$1m for "expenses" incurred in locating the remains. In the past, a single set of American remains has been discovered by CILHAI to contain bones from as many as three different bodies.

"The North Korean recovery technique is inadequate," says Mr Coles. "They might find a hip here and a leg bone there and think that's good enough to make a person. That's unacceptable to us."

British diplomats in New York were approached by the North Korean mission to the UN in July 1995 with news of the remains. The North wanted a hand-over to be conducted bilaterally between London and Pyongyang. As a member of the UN command, which technically monitors the Korean armistice, Britain insisted that the body be handed over draped in the UN flag.

From the beginning, however, it was assumed on all sides that the remains were British. The British Defence attaché in Seoul, Brigadier Colin Parr, negotiated the hand-over with the North Koreans, although he did so in his capacity as a UN representative. When the casket was handed over on 31 October 1995, it was Brigadier Parr who inspected it.

Britain's strict adherence to the terms of the Armistice appears to have cost it dearly. Having surrendered the remains to the Pentagon, it is proving difficult to get them back.

"In hindsight," says one diplomat, "it might have been better if we had never handed them over."

Sam Mercer, of the British Korean Veterans' Association fought with the Gloucestershire Regiment at the Imjin River. "The saddest thing for us was we lost 58 killed in that battle and we were not physically able to bury them," he said.

Because the bodies were left behind enemy lines, many were listed as "Missing in Action", which made it harder for their families to come to terms with. Mr Ellison said: "We will be delighted if everything goes well. It will be a great load off the family's mind."

Talks bring a glimmer of hope to divided nation

The early signs, at least, were good. Talks between North and South Korea, divided since the Korean war, began yesterday with cautious indications from both sides that there might be progress in healing the division of the Korean peninsula.

Under a US-South Korean proposal, China and the United States would be the intermediaries in four-way negotiations on a security plan to replace the 1953 armistice that ended fighting in the 1950-1953 Korean War. The talks, which began in

a hotel across the street from the United Nations, were scheduled for one day but could continue tomorrow, US officials said.

North Korea's vice-foreign minister, Kim Gye Gwan, recalled a Korean proverb that "the beginning means the work is half done." He added: "I think we will come out with some results."

A South Korean diplomat, Suh Ji-Won was optimistic, saying "the fact that they [North Koreans] came to give a response is good. We came here

to listen to what the North Korean delegates have to say." Asked what he expected from the talks, the South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister and delegation chief, Song Young Shik, crossed his fingers for luck.

Last month, US and South Korean representatives briefed the North Koreans in New York about the offer. North Korea asked for another round of discussions, saying it needed more time to study it. Privately, US officials said they were optimistic the North would accept the offer for

negotiations to end formally the state of war which has existed since the armistice was signed.

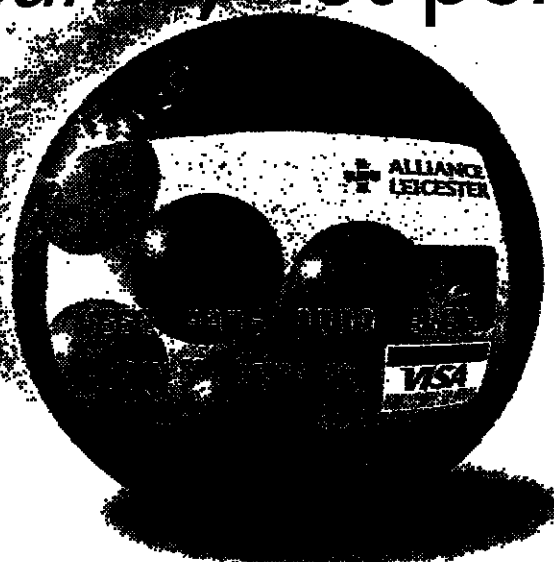
Nicholas Burns, a US State Department spokesman, said the United States was anxious for the talks "to determine ways to promote stability — security stability — on the Korean peninsula". On the eve of yesterday's talks, the US announced it will ship \$15m (£9.25m) worth of corn to North Korea to assist children under six who are affected by severe food shortages. Mr Burns said

the decision was not linked to a North Korean acceptance of the peace talks offer. But the North Koreans had indicated that they believe American help in overcoming the country's critical food shortage is a sign of good faith.

SEOUL (Reuters) — South Korea is preparing for the arrival of a defecting top Pyongyang ideologue. Security officials in Seoul said Hwang Jang-yop, now sheltering in the Philippines after fleeing through Peking, would arrive in Seoul soon.

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For the woman in Janet's Salon who was worried about paying 'through the nose' for what was advertised as a 'bargain mortgage'...



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Tung feels US chill and calls off visit

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

Tung Chee-hwa, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong's first post-colonial government, announced yesterday that he would postpone a planned visit to the US next month as his leading opponent, Martin Lee, the leader of the Democratic Party, prepares for a meeting tomorrow with President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore.

It is understood that Mr Tung was concerned that he would not be received at the same level or with the same degree of warmth which has greeted Mr Lee during his lengthy visit to the United States.

Mr Lee arrived in the United States without any confirmed meetings at senior levels of the US administration. However he has already held a successful 45 minute meeting with Madeleine Albright, the Sec-

retary of State, and secured a considerable coup by arranging a meeting with the President. These meetings were the result of intensive lobbying by Mr Lee's impressive number of allies in Congress.

Branded as a "subversive" by the Chinese government, Mr Lee is the colony's most prominent democrat and leader of the party which has consistently scored the highest number of votes in Hong Kong's limited election system.

Mr Tung is well connected in United States business and foreign policy circles, but his aides were concerned that his connections would not be sufficient to make the sort of impact Mr Lee has been making during his visit.

They were also worried that Mr Tung would be forced to spend most of his time on the defensive, answering human rights concerns and explaining why he plans to curb civil lib-

erties in the territory. A spokesman for Mr Tung insisted that he would try to visit the US in the second half of the year, explaining that he could not do so before then, "mainly because of the tremendous workload generated by the many pressing issues that remained to be resolved".

The background to the jockeying for attention in the United States is a growing anti-Peking sentiment in Congress and spreading unease about China's intentions towards Hong Kong. Mrs Albright has pointedly accepted an invitation to attend the 30 June celebrations to mark the handover to Chinese rule, saying she would be present to underline the United States commitment to preserving Hong Kong's current way of life and freedoms.

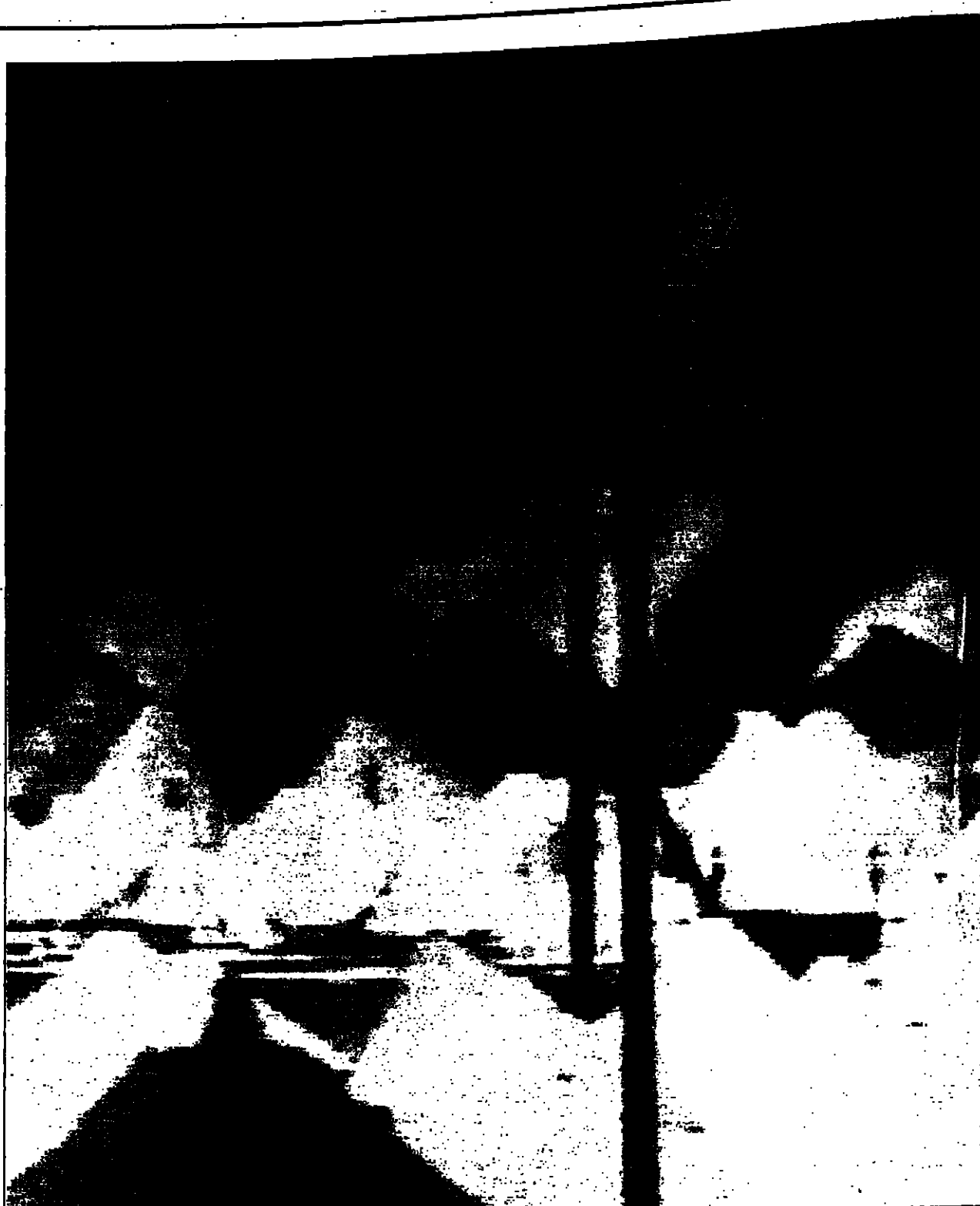
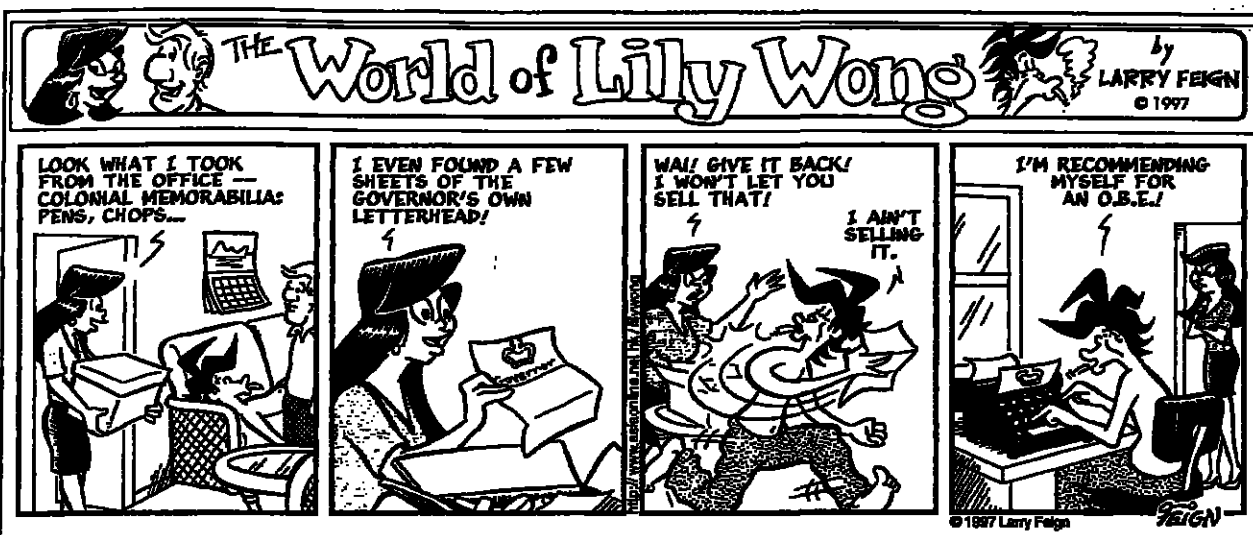
Senator Jesse Helms, the powerful chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Com-

mittee, has indicated the extent of hostility to China by suggesting that members of the Hong Kong Provisional Legislature, appointed by the Chinese government, should be barred from entering the US because they are serving on an illegitimate body.

Mr Tung has indirectly accused Mr Lee of being responsible for American hostility by accusing him of spreading a negative view of Hong Kong in the United States. He originally said that the purpose of his visit would be to "dispel pessimistic views".

London (Reuters) - Britain summoned a senior Chinese diplomat in London to warn him of "deep concerns" over the role of Peking's Provisional Legislature for Hong Kong.

Reports that this Chinese body was considering laws on public holidays in Hong Kong provoked Britain to summon the Chinese official.



Torched: Flames fanned by strong wind engulf the tent compound outside the holy city of Mecca (above), leaving a mass of burned-out wreckage (below). More than 210 Muslim pilgrims were killed. Photographs: Reuters

Saudis clear debris of Mecca's hellish pilgrimage inferno

Patrick Cockburn

Saudi Arabian authorities in Mecca were yesterday trying to identify the bodies of 217 Muslim pilgrims burned to death in the fire which engulfed their tent city as they attended the Hajj pilgrimage.

A further 1,290 people are known to have suffered injuries as the flames, fanned by the wind, spread rapidly through the 70,000 tents pitched on the plain of Mina outside the holy city of Mecca.

Diplomats said the number of casualties, mostly from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, might rise. "All our efforts to get an idea of the number of the dead are in vain," said one foreign envoy. "Hospital staff are not authorised to speak and the Saudi authorities are not sharing new information with the embassies or the press."

Mohammed Hamad Ansari, the Indian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, said the number of Indian victims might eventually total 100. "The bodies were charred in the fire and we cannot identify them except from a missing persons list," he said. About 12 Pakistanis have been identified out of 30 who are thought to have died.

In the remains of the Mina encampment, trucks were beginning yesterday to cart away burned wreckage of everything from charred water bottles to

refrigerators, air conditioners and buses, which caught fire as strong winds spread the flames. The cause of the blaze is being attributed to an exploding gas cylinder, often used for cooking food and making coffee and tea by many of the 2 million Hajj pilgrims.

To take part in the Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. It reached its high point yesterday as pilgrims, clothed in white, walked to Mount Arafat, where the Prophet Mohammed is reputed to have preached his last sermon. The pilgrims chanted: "I have answered your call, God, there is no God but you."

Behind them, new tents are being erected to replace those destroyed in the blaze.

The Eid al-Adha feast at the end of the Hajj is celebrated by Muslims today.

The level of casualties is below that of 1990, when a stampede in a tunnel between Mina and Mecca led to 1,400 people being crushed to death. In 1987 400 people were killed in clashes with Saudi security. In 1994 another 270 people were crushed to death in a stampede. Saudi Arabia says it has spent \$18.6bn (£10bn) in the last 10 years on improving facilities for those attending the Hajj.

The Saudi authorities say the problems stem from the failure of Muslim countries to keep to a quota system agreed in 1988 by the Organisation of the Islamic Countries. Under this a country is allowed one pilgrim performing the Hajj for every 1,000 Muslims in its population. But in the past year, almost half the 2 million pilgrims were from Saudi Arabia itself.



Attorney scandal touches heart of Israeli coalition

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, is waiting to see the casualty rate among his closest political colleagues after Israeli police recommended pressing criminal charges against three leading figures in the scandal over the appointment of the Attorney-General.

The recommendations come in a police report completed after a three-month investigation into the political influence used to get Roni Bar-On, a lawyer, made Attorney-General in January. At the centre of the scandal is the allegation that Aryeh Deri, leader of one of the parties in the government coalition and who is on trial for corruption, obtained the appointment of Mr Bar-On in order to ease his legal troubles.

Despite the police recommendation to indict three of those involved, the State Attorney and Attorney-General are unlikely to prosecute Tzahi Hanegbi, the Justice Minister, or Avigdor Lieberman, director general of the Prime Minister's office, according to press reports. But even if he is not indicted it may prove impossible for Mr Hanegbi, accused of helping to cook up the deal whereby Mr Bar-On was appointed (he resigned after 48 hours), to remain as Justice Minister.

If Mr Deri, leader of the religious Shas party, is indicted, his party is threatening to bring down the government coalition. The police say that during their investigations they were subjected to political pressure, which they withstood.

Mr Netanyahu is criticised in the report but the police did not move to charge him formally. Whatever the mechanism by which Mr Bar-On was chosen, there is no doubt that the force behind his appointment was Mr Deri's desire to see a malleable party loyalist in the Attorney-General's office willing to support a plea bargain.

Meanwhile, Israel yesterday closed the West Bank, preventing all Palestinian workers from entering Israel or Jewish settlements. The Defence Ministry said it had received warnings of attacks on Israelis.

There were some signs of the diplomatic stalemate ending as Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, met David Levy, the Foreign Minister, in Malta. Both sides said progress had been made and the origins of present disputes discussed. Security committees of Palestinians and Israelis are to resume meeting.

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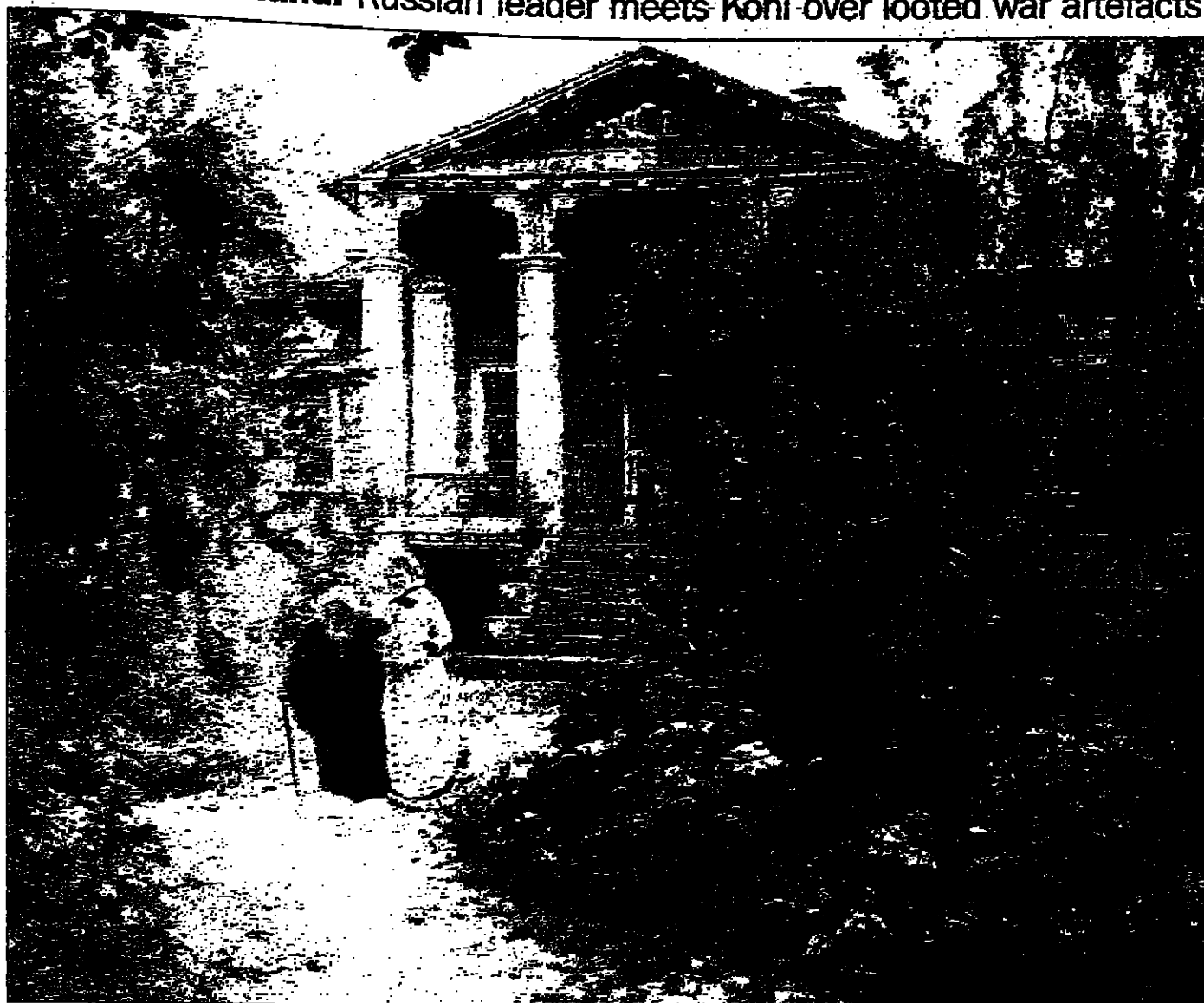
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مكتبة من الأصل

Art in demand: Russian leader meets Kohl over looted war artefacts as Moscow's museums suffer at the hands of the mafia



Yeltsin treasures spoils of diplomacy

Imre Karacs
Bonn

Clutching a selection of looted art treasures, Boris Yeltsin flew to Germany yesterday for a bout of high-profile bonhomie and backroom bartering with his "friend", Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

The art works, to be presented today as "gifts" to their rightful owners, the German people, are expected to be the sweetener in tough negotiations over Nato's encroachment into former Soviet dominions. But the gesture has been soured by howls of protest in Moscow over the Russian President's unorthodox cultural exchange.

Mr Yeltsin wants to return all the spoils plundered by the Red Army at the end of the Second World War, as agreed by the two countries seven years ago. He has vetoed a decision by the Duma, the lower house of parliament, to keep the controversial artefacts on Russian soil.

His blocking move was rejected by a second Duma vote earlier this month, but yesterday the Federation Council, the upper house, put off consideration of the issue for a month.

Opposition politicians in Moscow argue that the war booty should stay in Russia because it was Russia, after all, which had won the war. Or, as the ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy

fascist, 20th-century barbarians... We should have occupied the whole of Germany, taken out all industry and shot Germans."

As one might infer from those words, Mr Zhirinovskiy is not in favour of restoring a single Goya or Dürer to its pre-war ownership.

Not all Russians would go quite that far, but even mainstream politicians believe that Germany must continue to pay in some way for the destruction wrought during the war.

In an open letter to Chancellor Kohl, the Duma's leading art adviser, Yevgeny Ussenko, claims that German troops caused damage amounting to \$1.5bn (£810m) in today's money to Russian culture. "Compared to these losses, the German works of art taken to Russia were insignificant compensation," Professor Ussenko wrote.

The works, hidden by the Nazis in the vaults of country manors and castles, were tracked down at the end of the war by special detachments of the NKVD, the KGB's predecessor.

They include sculpture, ceramics, and archeological treasures as well as paintings. Some were returned to East Germany in the Communist era, but most of the loot remained locked in Russian cellars until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Two years ago Moscow's Pushkin museum displayed for the first time 63 paintings by European masters in an exhibition entitled "Twice Rescued" - a tongue-in-cheek reference to their "rediscovery" under Russian curators' feet. All the works had come from the "war collection".

The row about the war booty, which both countries thought they had settled in their Friendship Treaty in 1990, remains the biggest obstacle to an amicable relationship. Art history is expected to take up much valuable time at today's discussions between the two leaders - time they would rather spend haggling about Russia's place in European security.

As an avid fan of Nato's eastward expansion as well as the self-appointed champion of Russian interests in the West, Chancellor Kohl is as close as one can find to an honest broker. Mr Yeltsin knows he cannot stop Nato creeping ever closer to his borders, but he is relying on the German leader to press for an accommodation which will not undermine Russia's security and pride.

Today's meeting is likely to offer the last opportunity to reach an agreement on guarantees to Russia in exchange for Moscow's nod towards Nato's plans. Russia hopes to sign a document elevating it to a Nato "partner" at the end of next month, and in July the Atlantic alliance is expected to invite Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to submit their membership applications.

In danger: Works like this one, by Russian artist Vasily Polenov, have been the target of art thieves

Photograph: AKG London eloquently put it: "The Germans are

While thieves strip a nation of its heritage

Phil Reeves
Moscow

Russia is losing its heritage by the crateload as criminal groups smuggle more and more art to the West, aided by chaotic policing and inadequate security at many of the country's museums, libraries and churches.

Millions of dollars worth of books, manuscripts, paintings, icons and other treasures have ended up in the hands of smugglers seeking to sell them abroad through a network of shops run by émigrés in Britain, the United States, Italy, and Israel.

According to one of Russia's top crime-fighters, General Vasily Fedoschenko, of the Interior Ministry's criminal investigation division, art theft and smuggling is getting steadily worse. He said yesterday that more than 3,000 related offences were registered by police last year - a figure that is likely to represent only a fraction of the true number.

Law enforcement agencies appear to be fighting a losing battle, which is complicated by Russia's vast borders, and endemic official corruption. But there have been several successes. The general said that not long ago Russian detectives, working in tandem with Scotland Yard, removed four paintings from Sotheby's and Christies in London after concluding that they had been stolen from a museum in Sochi on the Black Sea. They were by renowned nineteenth century Russian artists Ivan Aivazovsky, Vasily Polenov, and Vasily Vereshchagin.

Russian customs notched up another coup last October in St Petersburg when they arrested a 56-year-old Russian man just before he boarded a flight to

New York carrying suitcases loaded with art treasures worth tens of millions of dollars. These included a 330-year-old prayer book that belonged to Alexei Romanov, father of Peter the Great, a letter written by both the Tsar himself, another written by Catherine the Great, and contemporary portraits of Trotsky.

Although art smuggling is worse now than ever before, it is not new. From the 1970s, the KGB fought to contain what they called the "Andropov Mafia", who toured the provinces stealing artefacts to smuggle abroad. Some criminals are prepared to go to exotic lengths: five years ago, police arrested a gang operating in the "Golden Ring" of cities around Moscow who had seized a large number of icons after drugging a church warden.

The loss of cultural treasures is deepening sentiments in post Cold War Russia that it is being plundered and exploited by the West, even though the smuggling business is run by home-grown gangs.

The authorities have imposed tight rules over the legal export of art. Buyers have to apply to a government committee for a licence for every artefact they want to take out of the country. These are often refused, especially in the case of pre-war art and almost all icons.

Among those who have unwittingly fallen foul of the system was the entertainer, Michael Jackson. When he performed in Moscow last year, he was given a ceremonial sabre by General Alexander Kozhakov, President Yeltsin's former chief bodyguard. Customs officials concluded it was an historic relic that could not leave the country. They sent it straight back to the general, much to his annoyance.



Return to sender: Customs stopped Michael Jackson taking away a "relic" gift from Alexander Kozhakov



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obituaries / gazette

Professor Glanville Williams

Glanville Williams was a legal scholar in a class on his own. His writings were prodigious in their quantity, quality and range. He was a dedicated and inspiring teacher. And he was also a hugely effective law reformer – a kind of legal Asterix, whose boundless energy and unquenchable optimism led him into endless battles against unjust laws, many of which he won despite the overwhelming odds against him.

Nowadays Williams is best known as a writer on criminal law, where his fame rests on four books, the influence of which has been enormous. First among these stands his *Criminal Law: the General Part* (1953), a 900-page text concerned, as he explained in the preface, "to search out the general rules of the criminal law, i.e. those applying to more than one crime". The *Proof of Guilt* (1955) is a comparative account of the rules by which criminal cases are tried in England and Wales, penetrating in its analysis of the merits of our system as well as its defects.

The *Sanctity of Life and the Criminal Law* (1958) examines the philosophical basis for laws against contraception, sterilisation, abortion, suicide and euthanasia, when it appeared it was very controversial. The fourth book is his 1,000-page *Textbook of Criminal Law* (1978). This was a successful student textbook, and would be one still if he had ever managed to finish the third edition, on which he had been labouring for 14 years at the time of his death.

In fact, his range as a writer went far beyond the criminal law. Before turning to the criminal law, Williams had already written what are still the definitive books on a range of other important legal subjects: *Liability for Animals* (1939), *The Law Reform (Frustrated Contracts) Act* (1943) (1945), *Crown Proceedings* (1948), *Joint Obligations* (1949), and *Joint Torts and Contributory Negligence* (1950). In 1947 he had edited *Salmond's Jurisprudence*.

He covered an even wider range of topics in the huge number of articles which, astonishingly, he also found the time to write. It is difficult, indeed, to think of any important legal subject on which at some time he did not have something original and interesting to say. Nor is this all. For taking notes, he invented and patented a new form of shorthand (*Speed-hand Shorthand*, 1952). And with *Learning the Law* (1945), now in its 11th edition, he wrote a little introductory book about law studies which was, and still remains, indispensable reading for any would-be law student.

Williams's voluminous and sometimes complicated writings are inspired by two big and simple notions. The first is that the law should be clear, consistent and accessible. The second is that law should be humane. He was a convinced utilitarian, who held that punishment was an evil to be avoided unless there was a good reason for imposing it, and for whom "good reasons" meant the well-being of society, not the tenets of religious belief. Hence Leon Radzinowicz's celebrated *bon mot* about him: "Glanville Williams is the illegitimate child of Jeremy Bentham".

These utilitarian beliefs also underlay Williams's efforts as a law reformer, an activity in which he managed to play two roles at once. The first was the "establishment man". He devoted many hours over several decades to serving on a range of official committees, in par-



Williams: "radical outsider"

ticular the Criminal Law Revision Committee, of which he was a member from 1959 to 1980. In this capacity he shares the credit for a number of reports which led, among other things, to the decriminalisation of suicide in 1961 and the radical reform and codification of the law of tort in 1968.

His second role was that of "radical outsider". Working sometimes with others, sometimes on his own, he was adept at stirring up public opinion over matters where official interest in reform was lacking. He took a major part in the campaign to liberalise the law on abortion, which largely succeeded with the Abortion Act of 1967. He was also very active in the campaign to legalise voluntary euthanasia, which has so far largely failed. He was born president of the Abortion Law Reform Association, and a vice-president of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society.

In the 1950s he was among the first to draw public attention to the problems children face when giving evidence in sex cases – and was still campaigning on the subject in the 1980s. In 1960 he was the first person

publicly to advocate the tape-recording of interviews with suspects in police stations; initially condemned as a silly and impractical idea, 25 years later this became almost universal practice. Perhaps his greatest triumph was in 1986, when a well-timed article persuaded the House of Lords to rule that a person can be guilty of attempt even where the crime in question was impossible of completion: so overruling their decision the other way the year before, and expressly overruling, for the first time ever, their previous decision in a criminal case.

Glanville Williams was a respected and innovative teacher. He was also very supportive throughout their careers to a number of his junior colleagues. Although a kind man, however, he was rather shy, and not a great socialiser outside the circle of his family. He was brought up in a pious Congregationalist family in South Wales, and much of his background stayed with him. Notwithstanding his great eminence, he remained to the end of his days a quiet-spoken, modest, gentle, serious-minded Welshman. Although an agnostic for most of his life he knew his Bible, and the use of biblical phrases was instinctive to him. "He wrote him lip and thigh", he once said, describing an article an American had written criticising Sigmund Freud.

Academic honours were heaped upon him, culminating in 1995 in a Doctorate of Letters *honoris causa* from his own university, Cambridge. During his lifetime it was widely rumoured that he had never been offered a knighthood because he had been staunchly pacifist before the Second World War, and during it a conscientious objector. The truth, however, is that he was offered one and declined it, partly from modesty, and partly because he thought it incongruous that a man who had refused to wield a bayonet should theoretically bear a sword.

J.R. Spencer

Glanville Llewelyn Williams, lawyer, born Bridgend, Glamorgan 15 February 1911; called to the Bar, Middle Temple 1935; Research Fellow, St John's College, Cambridge 1936-42; Reader in English Law, then Professor of Public Law and Queen's Professor of Jurisprudence, London University 1945-55; Fellow, Jesus College, Cambridge 1955-57; Reader in Law, Cambridge University 1957-65; Professor of English Law 1966-68; Rouse Ball Professor of English Law 1968-78; QC 1968; married 1939 Lorna Lawfield (one son); died 10 April 1997.

Lesley Scott-Ordish

Lesley Scott-Ordish devoted most of her life to investigating and writing about the bond between humans and animals, in particular dogs. She was the founder of Pro Dogs National Charity and its sister charity Pat Dogs (Pets as Therapy).

She did not have a dog of her own during childhood – her first was a cocker spaniel bought just after her marriage to Peter Ordish in 1953. She trained as a journalist and in the early Seventies was dismayed by the extensive press coverage first in the United States and later in Britain, of health hazards associated with dogs – for example,

the risk of blindness from toxocarosis, which in rare cases can be passed from dogs to humans.

In 1976, working at first from her home in Kent, she founded Pro Dogs, in response to what she saw as a growing anti-dog movement in the media and its damaging effect on public perceptions of dogs and their owners. She set out to highlight the beneficial influence dogs can have and to provide an umbrella organisation for responsible dog owners. Over the years, the charity gathered a panel of veterinarians and medical experts to respond to health scares and organised campaigns against

restrictive laws on dogs and where they may be exercised, including work towards the abolition of the dog licence, which was eventually scrapped in 1988.

From members' letters and phone calls, Lesley Scott-Ordish discovered the trauma experienced by the elderly if forced to give up a much-loved pet upon going into residential care. This led her to found, in 1983, Pat Dogs, a national home and hospital visiting scheme through which carefully screened dog owners visit the sick and elderly on a regular basis with their dogs. The therapeutic effects of patting a dog were impressive and

with encouragement from the Royal College of Nursing, a network of volunteers with friendly dogs was set up. There are now over 9,500 of these special dogs registered with the charity.

Scott-Ordish assisted in the launch of another charity, Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, in 1982 (which trains dogs to alert a deaf owner to a ringing doorbell or boiling kettle, for example) and Canine Partners for Independence in 1991 (providing dogs to help the severely disabled). She became vice-president of both organisations.

In 1990 she published *Heroic Dogs*, to celebrate the first 11

years of the Pro Dogs Gold Medal Awards. These are the annual canine "Oscars", awarded since 1979 for outstanding achievements in life saving, devotion to duty and pet of the year, intended as an alternative to the Crufts prizes.

She spent the latter part of her life promoting the many positive benefits of dog ownership. She bred English setters for a while, returning more recently to the cocker spaniel. In 1996 she published *Cocker Spaniels, an Owner's Guide* and in 1997 brought out *For Love of Dogs*, chronicling 20 years of research into how and why animal companionship can

affect the health and well-being of humans. She described this booklet as "something of a swansong, and tribute to all the lovely dogs who comfort and uncomplicatedly love us".

Arnold Rosen

Lesley Scott-Ordish, charity administrator, born 25 March 1932; married 1953 Peter Ordish (two sons); died Ashford, Kent 26 March 1997.

*The main source of fundraising for Pat Dogs is their annual "Walkover Britain" event: 45 organised walks, 20 years of research into how and why animal companionship can



Sensitive leading man: Bushell between Judy Gann (left) and Winifred Shattler (right) in *Lilies of the Field*, 1934. Photograph: Ronald Grant

Anthony Bushell

With his upright bearing, cultured diction and delicate good looks – he once understudied Ivor Novello – the actor (later producer and director) Anthony Bushell started his career as a sensitive, if callow, leading man before graduating to character roles in which he excelled as (not always honourable) members of the British military.

He had a brief career on the London and Broadway stages and as a leading man in Hollywood before carving a niche for himself in the British cinema. Later he became Sir Laurence Olivier's general manager and both produced and directed movies and television shows.

Born in Westerham, Kent in 1904, he was educated at Magdalen College School, then at Hertford College, Oxford, where he befriended Evelyn Waugh, a fellow member of the Hypocrites Club, a raffish group described by Waugh in his diaries as "notorious not only for drunkenness but for flamboyance of dress and manner which was in some cases patently homosexual". Waugh describes their heavy drinking and wild parties, including an "orgy" where he "unearthed a strap and whipped 'him'". Despite the roistering, Bushell was the college's middle-weight boxing champion during his first year, and later became stroke of their rowing crew.

After Oxford, Bushell studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and made his theatrical debut at the Adelphi Theatre in 1924 in *Diplomacy*, starring Gladys Cooper and Sir Gerald Du Maurier. In 1927 he made his debut on the Broadway stage opposite Jeanne Eagels in *Her Cardboard Lover*, and the following year he married the musical comedy star Zelma O'Neal. In his next

Broadway play, Somerset Maugham's *The Sacred Flame*, he was seen by the actor George Arliss who insisted that he be cast as the romantic juvenile in *Disraeli* (1929), Arliss's first talking picture.

Bushell followed this with the role of the cowardly Second Lieutenant Hilbert (the first of many military roles he would play) in James Whale's screen version of R.C. Sheriff's sardonic anti-war play *Journey's End* (1930). He made a dozen more films in Hollywood, including *Three Faces East* (1930), starring Erich von Stroheim as a German spy operating as a butler in Bushell's household, *Five Star Final* (1931) in which Bushell was one of those victimised by a ruthless tabloid exposé, Allan Dwan's *Chances* (1931), as an army officer who loves the same girl as his brother (Douglas Fairbanks Jr.), *Vanities Fair* (1932) with Myrna Loy as Becky Sharp, and the silent star Pola Negri's first talkie, *A Woman Commands* (1932).

He returned to England in 1932 to continue his acting career, his prolific film roles including a naval officer in *The Midshipmaid* (1932) with Jessie Matthews, the romantic lead in the Karloff horror film *The Ghoul* (1933), a friend to hero Leslie Howard in an acclaimed version of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1934), a secret agent who helps British spy Vivien Leigh in *Dark Victory* (1937), and the convicted star football player who is poisoned during a match in Thorold Dickinson's enjoyable *Arsenal Stadium Mystery* (1939), which featured the Arsenal football team.

Bushell's own sporting prowess surfaced again in 1939 when, while appearing with the Malvern Festival Players, he was part of their cricket team

against the Stratford Festival Players and scored 112 not out. After service in the Second World War commanding a squadron of the Guards Armoured Division, during which he met and married his second wife Anne (his first marriage had been dissolved in 1935), Bushell returned to acting, but also moved to the production side of the business.

Forming a close personal and business relationship with Laurence Olivier, he was associate producer on Olivier's Oscar-winning film of *Hamlet* (1948), and later functioned as associate director on both *Richard III* (1955) and *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1957). This meant overseeing the scenes in which Olivier himself appeared, though according to Colin Clark's diaries *The Prince, The Showgirl and Me* (1995), Bushell "couldn't direct traffic... but Sir Laurence needs a chum to guard his rear, as it were, and it is a great joy to have Tony around".

The affable and companionable Bushell was always popular with his fellow workers. In 1949 he made his first film as a director, *The Angel With A Trumpet*, in which he also acted. *Keen on a German film* *Der Engel mit der Posaune*, its tale of a Viennese piano-making family through three generations was considered somewhat ponderous, while his next effort *The Long Dark Hall* (1951), a thriller produced by Bushell and co-directed with Reginald Beck made little impression despite the star team Rex Harrison and Lilli Palmer. His last feature as a director was *The Terror of the Tongs* (1961).

Three of his more sympathetic roles on screen – a colonel in charge of bomb disposals in Powell and Press-

burger's *The Small Back Room* (1948), the urbane devious British Minister who misleads the enemy in the same team's *Battle of the River Plate* (1956) and a kindly brigadier helping pilot Dirk Bogarde who has secretly married a Japanese girl in Ralph Thomas's *The Wind Cannot Read* (1958) – were particularly impressive, and he was perfectly cast as Captain of the Carpathia, endeavouring to reach the sinking *Titanic* in Roy Baker's *A Night to Remember* (1958).

He was associate director on *The Red Beret* (1953), *Hell Below Zero* (1954) and *Shower Junction* (1956), all this serving as apprenticeship for his entry into television, where besides acting in many plays and series he produced the fondly remembered *Sir Francis Drake* series (1961-62) – 26 stirring episodes with Terence Morgan and Jean Kent as Drake and Queen Elizabeth – and directed episodes of *The Saint*. His television acting roles included the commander who inspires four former wartime colleagues to reunite in a fight against injustice in the opening episode of the series *The Four Just Men* (1959) and the memorably malevolent and pig-headed colonel in the chilling *Quatermass and The Pit* (1967), one of the best of all television's sci-fi thrillers (far superior to its film translation). After retirement, Anthony Bushell became a director of the Monte Carlo Golf Club and maintained an active and jovial social life.

Tom Vallance

Anthony Bushell, actor, director and producer, born Westerham, Kent 19 May 1904; twice married, first 1928 Zelma O'Neal (marriage dissolved 1935); died Oxford 2 April 1997.

Jock Bain

Trombone players tend to like each other more than other instrumentalists do. They watch out for each other's interests as though they were blood relatives and even the distinction between jazz and non-jazz players becomes blurred. Jock Bain was unusual at being good at both kinds of playing. It is not going too far to suggest that he was a British Tommy Dorsey. But unlike Dorsey, Bain was a good jazz improviser (Dorsey liked to be able to polish his "improvised" solos in advance).

Bain was equally at home delivering poised and elegant features with Mantovani or mixing it with top jazzmen like Ronnie Scott or Tubby Hayes. Indeed at the 1955 Jazz Jamboree at the Gaumont State in Kilburn, north London, Bain's jazz group shared the billing with the Ted Heath Band, the Ray Ellington Quartet and bands led by Scott and Hayes.

Bain was associated for many years with the bandleader Gerald, notably in a performance during the Fifties at the Festival Hall of Igor Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto*. Some 10 years earlier, the then impetuous Stravinsky had accepted a commission from Woody Herman to compose the suite. The work proved enormously difficult for the Herman band to surmount, since it was written with symphony musicians in mind. But Gerald's orchestra had to be given credit for tackling the suite, no matter how obscure the artistic target. Everything after that must have seemed easy.

Taking up a trombone at school, Bain played in the City of Edinburgh Brass Band before playing in local dance halls. He moved to London in 1935 where he played for Tommy Finigan's band, but by the end of the year graduated into the Roy Fox Orchestra. Bain stayed with Fox for the next three years, and from then on was always a sideman with the top line bands. He worked with Ambrose in 1942 and with Maurice Winnick in 1943, rejoining both bands in later years, before joining Gerald at the end of 1944. In 1948 he left Gerald to open a photographic shop in Edinburgh, but the following year returned to London.

After a further spell with Bert Ambrose and with Carrol Gibbons, both in 1953, Bain concentrated on freelancing and became a highly successful studio musician. For so distinguished a jazz musician he recorded little, although he can be heard playing fine trombone with the Malcolm Lockyer Octet of 1957. Oddly, he is perhaps best known, albeit anonymously, for his smooth, Dorsey-like trombone solo on Mantovani's recording of "Charmaine", the ultimate antithesis of jazz.

Steve Voce

John Cockburn Bainsfather (Jock Bain), trombonist; born Edinburgh 8 June 1914; married 1933 Jessie Merlives (three sons, one daughter); 1957 Valerie Tyler; died Portsmouth 13 March 1997.



Scott-Ordish: the therapeutic effects of patting a dog

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

BAZLEY: Sir Thomas Stafford, Bt, late of Hatherly, died peacefully in his sleep on Monday 14 April, aged 89 years. No flowers please, by his request. Donations in lieu to the Woodland Trust or charities for the homeless. Private funeral. Memorial service to be announced.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen, Prince Andrew, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Kent, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Cornwall, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Suffolk, the Duke of Westmoreland, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Atholl, the Duke of Buccleuch, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Devon, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Kent, the Duke of Cornwall, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Suffolk, the Duke of Westmoreland, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Atholl, the Duke of Buccleuch, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Devon, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Kent, the Duke of Cornwall, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke 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Which Tory party would you be voting for?

Two weeks ago John Major held up a spade and said: "This is a spade". Yesterday he held it up and said: "This is a spade - and it's a shovel, too". Two weeks ago it was a "fantasy" (his word) that ministers would publicly dissent from the Government's policy on Europe. On Tuesday night it emerged that they had. Yesterday the Prime Minister boldly declared that any view other than the Government's line was "folly". But he then said the fools' views were fully in line with his own. They were totally opposed to a single European currency. But they could stay in the Government because they agreed that Britain should negotiate and then decide. Black can be seen as white. Chalk can also be cheese. You do not have to mix very many more metaphors, nor do you have to make a fetish of the idea of strong leadership, to find this degree of contradiction helplessly - tragically - absurd.

There is a view that textual analysis of local election addresses on the single currency is an obsession of the media village, an abstruse game far removed from the concerns of real people. This view was forcibly expressed by Michael Heseltine yesterday. "I don't think the public out there are in the least bit interested in the niceties of the argument. But they are interested in the substance of the issue," said the Deputy PM.

Unfortunately for him, the views of ministers on the euro are the substance of the issue. And the single European currency is emphatically an issue that matters. If it goes ahead, as it still seems it will in two years' time, Britain is unlikely to be a member at the outset. The decision on membership, yes or no, may well not have to be taken in the next five years. But, if there is any prospect of our entering the single currency at some point, we have to be ready to take part in the discussion about its composition.

The "wait and see" policy (the policy that is, on the face of it, agreed by both Tory and Labour) is the right policy. The present design of the euro laid down in the Maastricht Treaty is flawed on democratic grounds, in that the currency would be run by politically independent central bankers. Few people are wholly convinced of its economic merits.

But if Britain begins to suffer because it stands outside the single currency - because we endure higher interest rates and lost investment - then it may be better to join and seek to influence it from within rather than simply be influenced powerlessly outside.

That is the essence of the "wait and see" case. But we have reached an extraordinary moment. Indeed, it is a historic one. Voters who agree with the wait-and-see policy, however reluc-

tantly, cannot sensibly vote for the Prime Minister's party.

Why? Because the Prime Minister's party, whatever the Prime Minister himself might say, has made it resoundingly clear that it will never countenance replacing the pound with the euro. Period. Mr Major may protest all he likes, but it makes no difference. If he were re-elected (think this through) he would either have to ditch his wait-and-see policy immediately (in which case, what's a manifesto for?), or he would have to be replaced as party leader five minutes after he won (in which case, what is this election for?).



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Put that another way: Mr Major is now in the appalling position of asking the people of this country to vote on a fraudulent prospectus. The Tory manifesto says quite clearly that it is "in our national interest to keep our options open" on monetary union. But if a Tory government were re-elected, it is inconceivable that that option would be kept open.

That is why yesterday was a fateful day - not only in this election campaign, but in the long story of British politics. It was not because the Conservative Party seemed to be divided, although it was, but because of what it was

divided about and the consequences of that division. The parallel with the Labour Party in 1983 is not exact, but it is instructive. On 20 May 1983, with less than three weeks to go before polling day, Denis Healey, the deputy Labour leader, publicly disagreed with Michael Foot over the party's one-sided nuclear disarmament policy. This was no media mirage, but a fundamental disagreement which split the party from top to bottom on an issue of vital national importance. The unilateralists then and the Eurosceptics now share a backward-looking notion of national autonomy - an outdated view of Britain's place in the world. The unilateralists in the early Eighties temporarily won the soul of the Labour Party - and consigned it to nearly two decades of oblivion. Draw your own comparisons.

Tony Blair correctly describes this as the defining moment of the election campaign. It is a moment that defines John Major as a prisoner of the Eurosceptic tendency which, win or lose, will take control of his party after the election. The calculation being made by the rats on the sinking ship is, obviously, that the Tory party has already lost any semblance of unity, and can only win votes by trying to appeal to the supposedly popular position of overt rejection of the single currency.

Oh, but most voters are wiser than that. They know that the Tories are out

of touch. They know that this clamour to reject the Government's wait-and-see policy has nothing to do with what people are saying on the doorsteps. It is about trying to gratify Tory activists and about scared Tory MPs trying to protect their backs. John Major, sticking by a wise policy, but the prisoner of an increasingly foolish party, is complicit in that sorry spectacle.

In all probability, voters will indeed draw their own conclusion. They will not need newspapers to point it out.

Elton as the scale model

Elton John is fast bidding to become one of the nation's national treasures, a sort of pop Queen Mother. Yesterday he was awarded honorary membership of the Royal Academy of Music, in the junior department of which he once studied. Music teachers and parents will need to make up their minds about the value of his example. Should they guide against his dress sense? His judgement in choosing which football team to support? Or should they merely point out how wealthy you can become if only you play your daily scales.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UK can seize leadership in Europe

Sir: I recently returned from a posting with a British organisation in Taiwan. Britain is second only to the US in the buoyant market for students from Taiwan, and also the recipient of the greatest proportion of Taiwanese investment of any European country. Crucial to the United Kingdom's success in both of these fields: easy access to European markets now and, more particularly, in a more closely integrated Union; the related desire - particularly in the case of students - to gain knowledge of the workings of the European Union; and the English language.

Toyota's announcement some weeks ago about discontinuing investment if Britain did not join the single currency came as no surprise to me.

The English language is arguably Britain's most valuable national asset. It is the international language and will no doubt remain so, though the degree to which we continue to participate in the European Union will probably have a huge impact on the extent of its future predominance.

Britain, as a fully paid-up member of the Union, would be in an unassailable position to secure English as the Union's *lingua franca*. Consider the scope for the Union-wide - not to mention enhanced worldwide - exercise of British influence. Conversely, consider the lost opportunity if a Britain-less EU, or an EU in which Britain opted out of the single currency and the Social Chapter, were to choose one of its other languages. The people of the Pacific Rim are not falling over themselves to learn French and German. Yet.

As the world divides into three trade blocs, Europe is light-years ahead of both Asia and the Americas in terms of formally constructing its bloc. Nafta is, at least in population and membership terms, smaller than the EU. In Asia, notwithstanding Asean and Apec, there is nothing comparable. Moreover, the emerging markets of both Asia and Latin America, as well as the booming economies of the Pacific Rim, lack, as yet, the sophisticated political and legal infrastructures, not to mention the political stability, of Europe.

We are standing at the threshold of what could really be Europe's century. Who in the world, having created such a head-start for themselves, would decide to "wait and see"? I say, "Seize the day."

Britain remains a world-class performer in numerous fields. Higher education, the media, banking and finance, the law, science and technology, the arts, all spring to mind.

Why must we keep playing the whining, bruised victim of Euro-bullying instead of exercising leadership in Europe, given the overwhelming credentials we have for doing so?

MARK RAWSON

Kenilworth, Warwickshire

Sir: I am grateful to Robert Copinger of the European Movement (Letters, 15 April) for his frank admission that the direction of development of the European Union towards a federal superstate is a *fait accompli*. I agree that the British government formed after the election, whether Labour or Conservative, will not be able to change that.



Greed killed our fish stocks

Sir: As a sea angler of some 50 years' experience, I find it difficult to muster much sympathy for the professional fishermen of this country. The problems they face today are largely of their own making and if they had their way now there would be little future for coming generations.

My club fishes on the east coast and over the last 20 years has seen a spectacular decline in the cod, haddock and ling stock. In spite of hiring the best charter boats with the latest fish-finding electronics and sometimes steaming out some 40 miles, catches of mature fish are becoming increasingly rare. Some three years ago we fished out of Ambleside and after eight hours' fishing our party had no sizeable fish (National Federation of Sea Anglers rules prohibit the taking of any cod less than 17 inches long). Imagine our dismay when on leaving our boat we watched a commercial boat discharge a stack of fish boxes, the contents of which were 9-10 inch codling. Completely illegal, but who cares, there must be a market somewhere. To deny the scientific evidence on North Sea stocks is typical of people who now lament about quota-hopping when they themselves sold away their fishing rights.

Perhaps, on reflection, I should have some sympathy for these people. After 18 years of Tory government, encouraging "grab what you can today, don't consider others tomorrow", they are no different from a lot of other people. D MOTTREHEAD
Thelwall, Cheshire

History of your house

Sir: Rosalind Russell's piece on the history of London houses ("Who's been living in your house?", 12 April) touches on the fascinating past of some London houses, but implies that researching the history of a house is best left to professional researchers and ignores the wealth of source material available in London local authority record offices and local history libraries.

Most London boroughs' local studies services hold sources useful for house historians, including maps, historic street directories, local rate and taxation records, and visual records. Some produce leaflets outlining sources for the potential house historian. Details of these local services are given in *London Local Archives*, published by the Greater London Archives Network.

While some readers may prefer to have their house history done for them, it is much more exciting - and considerably cheaper - to do your own research, and have all the satisfaction of discovering the history of your own house for yourself.

DAVID MANDER
Chairman, Greater London Archives Network
London N22

Shoot the Tories!

Sir: I have some sympathy with Polly Toynbee's inclination to go out on 2 May with clipboard and revolver to shoot Conservative voters ("The horror of a new blue dawn", 14 April) should they have achieved victory for Mr Major.

In my dream, however, I shoot the offenders before they vote rather than afterwards. RICHARD CAPERON
Edgmond, Shropshire

The horror of grammar schools

Sir: The Tory plan to provide large grants to schools to become selective ("Go grammar" lure for schools", 14 April) plays on the snobbery and prejudice of vulnerable parents which has already caused so much inequity in UK education.

To anyone, like me, who was dumped into a poor secondary school in the late 1940s, due to the 11-plus selection examination, the thought of their return must fill them with horror. Many of these schools were an educational disaster where every child thought they had failed and would fail for the rest of their life - from the age of 11. They were divisive, had the poorest resources and naturally attracted the poorer teachers. There was an entrenched attitude with an unspoken theme which said, "Just bide your time here until you are old enough to go to work."

Rather than more schools getting more money, high-quality education should be for all, powered by good teachers and the best management and a government committed to equal opportunity. EDDIE BEDWELL
Swindon, Wiltshire

Sir: Two of the Conservative Party's manifesto proposals on education would spell disaster for the majority of children in areas where

there is a fully comprehensive secondary system, and would be particularly destructive in rural parts of the country.

With one in five secondary schools developing subject specialisations and another becoming a selective (rejective) grammar school ("a grammar school in every town"), we are left with three out of every five schools degenerating into lacklustre secondary-modern status. These would be underfunded, would be short of well-qualified specialist teachers and would inevitably occupy very modest positions in the examination league tables.

It is not difficult to imagine what would happen to the educational prospects and to the self-esteem of the pupils, especially the late developers, as their schools start the downward spiral resulting from the loss of their fair share of the more able intake.

Under the manifesto proposals, it would take the parents of only one school to vote for selective grammar status for the fully comprehensive pattern to collapse. Around 85 per cent of the children in the new grammar school's original catchment area would have to be bussed to other schools, so destroying the links between school and the communities to which the children belong.

We can only trust that these proposals are never implemented. D H KEDGE
Y KEDGE
Sonning Common, Oxfordshire

Devastating cut in benefit

Sir: Martin Moylan (Letters, 16 April) is quite right about the devastating effect of the single-room-rent measure on housing benefit for landlords. The effect on tenants will be even worse since there is not enough shared accommodation to go round. Liberal Democrats would revoke these regulations and will force a vote on them at the earliest opportunity in the next parliament. DIANA MADDOCK
Liberal Democrat
Spokesperson on Housing, Women's Issues and Family Policy
London SW1

Curb the plough

Sir: The ploughing of the orchard downland at Offham, Sussex ("Orchids wilt in farmer's field of flax", 12 April) should not be seen simply as a consequence of the flax subsidy which seems to have prompted it.

There are many reasons why farmers may find it more profitable to destroy downland turf than to accept such subsidies as may be available for conserving it. If we really want to protect scarce wildlife habitat, we should not rely on trying to doctor the agricultural subsidy regime. Still less should we embark on the hopeless task of trying to inflate subsidies for conservation to levels at which they

would outweigh all other possible sources of gain.

The time has come to apply controls which would simply forbid agricultural activity which would destroy important habitat which is in short supply. The ploughing of downland is now one such activity for which farmers should have to seek planning permission, as we all have to seek permission for any significant change which we wish to make to the built environment. MARION SICHARD
London SW20

Intolerable

Sir: "Zero tolerance", that sexy phrase of the moment intoned by politicians and policemen, does not have the American origins they claim.

The term actually originated in Edinburgh, where the district council used it to promote their widely respected campaign against sexual harassment "Zero Tolerance of Violence against Women". Then it made the journey across the Atlantic and has now returned to Britain as a slogan against crime.

In Cambridge, where the Students' Union launched an anti-sexual harassment campaign in 1989, we too have returned to the slogan. This year we aim to make the University a Zero Tolerant Zone for sexual harassment. But even here you have to be careful with its meaning. One of my friends has recently been concerned that my proclaiming myself "zero tolerant" obviously has something to do with my low alcohol intake. ZOE THIRLWELL
Trinity Hall, Cambridge

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

John Major

Yes, we have no Bahamas. But ...

Britain still has a handful of tiny dependencies, the last outposts of a once great empire, to muck up. Paul Vallely looks at the latest upheavals in St Helena, once home to Napoleon

Type the words "empire" and "last days of" into our library database and it comes up with the obituary of Larry Grayson, the pursued posturist who apparently appeared at the Finsbury Park and Chiswick Empires during the last days of Variety. Thus it ends, that glorious enterprise on which the sun was never to set. Either there or in the Ruritanian flummery of the British dependent territories with their plume-helmeted governors and their £6,000 ceremonial uniforms.

One such is St Helena, perhaps the most isolated of Britain's colonial remnants. It stands in the South Atlantic more than 1,000 miles off the coast of Africa – halfway between Angola and Brazil – a dark island "rising like an enormous black wart from the face of the deep," in the words of Napoleon Bonaparte. But then he was biased. This was his final place of exile for the six years until the defeated French emperor died in 1821.

St Helena is in the news, and in a way it has not been since Prince Andrew visited the island in 1984 and the Governor fell into the sea in full ceremonial dress as he tried to greet him. There has been what is said to pass for a riot among its 6,000 inhabitants. An angry crowd is reported to have set fire to the island's only police van. There have been demonstrations over cuts in the subsidy from London. Two of the five members of the island's executive council have resigned in protest, complaining of the "dictatorial" approach of the career-diplomat Governor, David Smallwood, who has fled the island by boat from which he pronounced by ship-to-shore fax: "There is no crisis on St Helena, constitutional or otherwise."

All jolly good stuff. Until you telephone the island and find your inquiries are greeted with a weary sigh and the inquiry: "Is the British general election so boring that you have nothing else to write about?" The facts,

you are told, are these, and they are unrelated:

• A man is in the island's 165-year-old blockhouse – recently inspected by Her Majesty's former chief inspector of prisons, Stephen Timmins – on remand after starting a number of blazes in a row with his girlfriend.

• The island's subsidy has been cut from £3.7m to £3.2m after a tough round of negotiations with the Overseas Development Administration. Two councillors have resigned in protest and the Governor has agreed to the councillors' request for an early general election, to be held on July 9.

• The Governor has gone on a long-planned holiday to the UK.

There is more to it than that, of course. For a start there was the refusal of the Governor to endorse the election of one Bobby Robertson to fill one of the two vacant posts. Mr Smallwood objected to him on the grounds that almost exactly a year ago a mob, fuelled by Mr Robertson, burst into the Governor's office in The Castle at Jamestown and seized Mr Smallwood by the gubernatorial tie. They then proceeded to occupy the place for more than three hours, protesting at the low rate of unemployment benefits on the island. "They grabbed my tie and pulled me by the throat," the Governor protested at the time. Tied up in a heavy duty business on an island where people would not dream of passing in the street without saying hello.

But there is a grimmer reality. It was comparatively simple after the Second World War began to outweigh the benefits to grant independence to Britain's larger colonies, in the belief that they might be economically viable (and they not been, in most cases, left with such inherently imbalanced post-colonial economic structures). But with the smaller dependencies it was not so simple, which is why we still have 14 – until, that is, the Black Watch bugler plays the



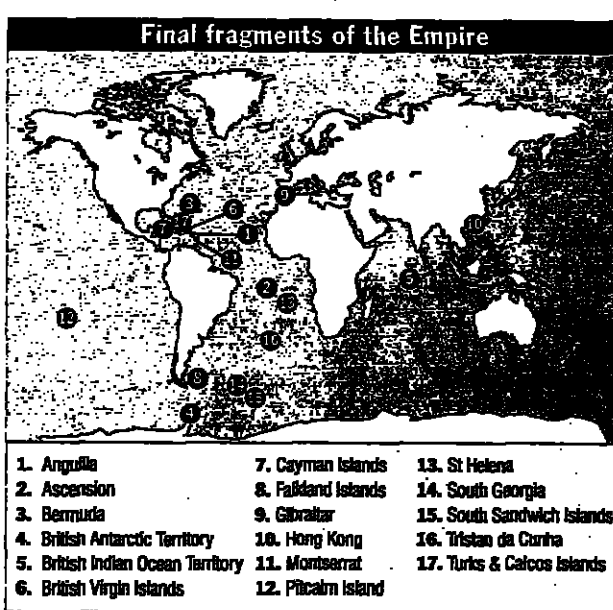
Colonial legacy: the troubled island of St Helena, and (right) the Governor of Bermuda, Lord Waddington, in full feathered flummery

Last Post at midnight on 30 June at the New Convention Centre in Hong Kong.

After getting shot of the Bahamas and other dependencies, the remnant of empire today consists in Bermuda, Gibraltar and five Caribbean territories – Anguilla, Montserrat, the Cayman Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the British Virgin Islands. There are also four South Atlantic dependencies – the British Antarctic (population: 300 scientists), the Falklands Islands, the whaling stations South Georgia and South Sandwich and St Helena and Dependencies (which include Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha). In addition there are in the Pacific – Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno islands (total population: 50; chief income: postage stamps). And there is the British Indian Ocean Territory (population: 0 since all the inhabitants were evicted to make way for the US military base on Diego Garcia).

True, Spain and Argentina want Gibraltar and the Malvinas back, but the rest of it summons a residuum of schoolboy pride for the tiny spots of pink which still sprinkle the global map. Despite their former enormous strategic importance, they now seem too quaint to be seriously politically incorrect.

St Helena has its share of quaintness. Its population of 6,000 from mixed British and



Indian descent, has virtually no natural resources and no airport. The Colonial Prisoners Removal Act 1884 has never been repealed, giving the Crown the power to exile troublesome subjects to St Helena. But visitors report a splendid old-fashioned friendliness to the "Hillman-driving, pound-spending, royalty-loving, pet-owning citizenry" who are so well-adjusted that when television was introduced last year instead of becoming sullen, couch potatoes infatuated by drugs, promiscuous sex and violence researchers discovered that St Helena's already well-behaved children had become more social, more amicable, more helpful.

But there is a worm at the heart of the apple. The latest figures show the island imported goods worth £4,692,000, but its exports earned it only £145,000. Once the island had a single cash crop – flax – from which its people used to make string, but the British Post Office, the island's biggest customer, went over to nylon twine in the Sixties. The economy has never recovered. It has some exports in canned and frozen fish but 70 per cent

of islanders work directly or indirectly for the government. As the Whitehall subsidy has been reduced unemployment has risen; over the past two years it has gone from 9 to 18 per cent. And a baby boom will place an extra 300 in the workforce by 2005.

Anxieties over unemployment are what lie behind the disagreement between St Helena councillors and the Governor. The island receives more than £5m a year, the highest amount per head of British aid anywhere. But British aid has been slowly whittled away. Unemployment benefit can be as low as £12 a week. Which is why ties can be strained.

It is not a problem peculiar to St Helena. A British initiative aimed at tightening control over its Caribbean dependencies last year brought an angry response from Anguilla, where the Prime Minister accused the Government of trying to force the five remaining Caribbean dependencies into independence.

To Britain the arithmetic is simple. It costs £9.5m to run St Helena and local revenue – from taxes, excise duties and fishing licences – is only £6m. In addition to the resulting



£3.5m subsidy Whitehall also provides the £3.2m development aid package from the ODA. That includes money for capital projects, technical assistance and subsidy for the Royal Mail Ship St Helena which costs £1m a year to run. Foreign Office officials

believe the subsidy can be reduced by a two-fold strategy. They want to "grow the private sector" and find employment opportunities off-shore. Only last month the Foreign Office launched a series of conferences to win new business for the remote territory.

Tourism is one possibility among the 12 miles of green fields and wooded hills in which Napoleon was once at liberty to ride with his 52-strong entourage. (His grave is not there, for the British allowed his coffin to be disinterred 20 years after his death, but the houses where he lived are well-preserved.) And tourism received a boost recently with the replacement of the hazardous landing stage with steps. Passengers used to have to grab a rope and leap to the seaward-covered dock as their boat rose as much as eight feet in the swell. When it was too rough islanders had to watch in dismay as liners like the *Canberra* turned away without putting a single passenger ashore. Today passengers can simply step ashore, holding on an iron railing.

But the task of finding work off the island so that locals can take short-term contracts and send money home – as they did in the past – has been scuppered by the 1981 Immigration Act. This legislation, in an attempt to avert any flood of Hong Kong Chinese, bans the residents of all the dependencies from settling in Britain. After the Act was passed the Falkland Islanders and the Gibraltarians were exempted but the only places where residents of St Helena can now seek work is on the military base on Ascension and in the Falkland Islands, to which emigration has increased by 30 per cent in recent years.

Empire for the British was a curious cocktail of exploitation and benevolence, cruelty and paternalism, ignominy and glory. Certainly it lacked the ruthlessness of the Spaniards in Latin America, Belgians in the Congo or French in Algeria and Indo-China. Nor was its end for the British and their subjects accompanied by the appalling bloodshed with which some others came to a close, which is perhaps why the Commonwealth is still a valued and indeed a growing organisation. But its last gasp is not without its pain. For all the small-town Punch-and-Judy politics. For all the feathery flummery.

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Who can we trust? Certainly not the voters

Today – an election forum special – How is the election being conducted by the main parties?

In a sophisticated, sensible way, as befits a mature democracy.

Could you give an example of this?

Certainly. The Tory party is paying thousands of pounds for the erection of notices saying **BRITAIN IS BOOMING DON'T LET LABOUR BLOW IT AND LET'S CHUCK THEM OUT**.

In what way is this sophisticated and sensible?

It is sophisticated and sensible as compared to the way parliamentary business is conducted in the House of Commons debating chamber.

How are the two main party leaders behaving?

Very maturely. They are insisting on keeping to the issues.

And what are the issues?

The issues are that you can't trust Phoney Tony and you can't vote for the Party of Sleaze.

So the conclusion is that we should all vote Lib Dem?

Yes. Except that that would be a wasted vote.

Who says that?

The two main parties.

So the two main parties do agree on something?

Yes, they agree on that.

They agree on lots of other things too – on education and health and transport and investment and ...

What do they say about all these things?

That they should be a lot better.

But surely if the Tories have been in power for 18 years, they should already have improved education and health and all these things?

Ah, but the Tories would say that they have put MORE money into education and MORE money into health and MORE money into ...

And have they actually put more money into all these things?

Oh, yes.

And have they got better, all these things?

No. They have just put more money in, that's all.

Don't forget that the Tories



Miles Kingston

find it hard to tell the difference between putting money into something and making it better.

I see. So, has it been a good election so far?

Yes, if you have been on holiday in Paraguay or trapped in a snow-storm in Siberia.

Is there nothing good about it at all?

Yes. It means we have heard nothing from the Ulster Unionists for a while.

Is that good?

Oh, yes. For the last six months the Tories had been

going through the same ritual dance of death with the Unionists to preserve their slim majority, and the media had been going sick with excitement at the idea that the Government might tumble. Every time there was a close vote, the media would ask the Unionists if they would back the Government, and the Unionists always said, "We will make up our minds on the issues involved on the night."

What did that mean?

It meant they would vote for the Government. The only time we ever hear from the Unionists is when there is a hung parliament.

Consequently, we must all pray that there is not a hung parliament.

Have there been any unusual features in this campaign?

Yes. Both sides are content to remind the electorate of the same thing – the record of the Tory party.

They both harp on that?

Yes. From different angles, of course. Tory sources tend to emphasise how wise Tory policies have made Britain the most prosperous country

in the history of the world.

Labour sources tend to emphasise the way Tory policies permitted the BSE crisis, the Scott report, the E coli outbreak, Black Thursday, the running down of our public transport ...

Has the E coli outbreak really caused by the Tories?

No. It was caused by Scottish inefficiency in the kitchen. When food is properly prepared, the bacteria are killed. But no party dares to criticise the voters.

Are the public in fact stupid, dishonest, greedy, etc?

Of course. In a democracy, most people are unfit to vote. Luckily, this is balanced by the fact that most candidates are unfit to stand.

Tomorrow we ask such vital questions as, Are Michael Howard and Douglas Hogg dead or merely locked away in a cupboard somewhere to stop them speaking? Has anyone mentioned Northern Ireland in the election? If there was a hung parliament, would we all go to Aintree on the Monday and vote again? Don't miss Election Forum Special tomorrow!

Major has been fishing in troubled waters

There he stands, plucky little fellow. No pasaran! John Major cries. The armada of filthy, thieving Spanish fishing boats, stealing our fish and our fishing quotas, shall not pass! British hearts of oak and jolly tars shall rule the European waves – even if there is no fish left in the sea. Hurray!

In defiance of the European ministers' decision to cut all fishing by 30 per cent, to try to save endangered fish and rescue the long-term prospects for the entire European fishing industry, the Prime Minister announced that he would break the law: "I have not a shred of intention of cutting the British catch unless and until we have a satisfactory agreement on quota-hopping." (It was embarrassingly revealed that, at the crucial ministers' meeting, the British minister had failed to speak up at all on the subject.)

But how did we, uniquely among European countries, come to sell our precious fishing quotas licences to foreigners in the first place?

This is yet another story of the British government blaming its own incompetence and folly on Brussels. Major's bluster on fishing is the BSE story all over again, a paradigm of the dishonesty with which this government has treated Europe and misled the British electorate about the nature of the European Union and the part we play in it.

This is the true story of fishing quotas. Trying to preserve fish stocks, the EU gave each country a fishing quota and a target for reducing the size of its fishing fleet. The EU offered an incentive to any fishermen wanting to get out of the business, promising to buy up their boats and compensate them, paying 70 per cent of the cost, with each country making up the difference.

But, until 1992, Britain refused to pay up that 30 per cent to retiring captains, even though it meant forgoing the 70 per cent EU grant. It was the kind of short-sighted, short-termist meanness that has characterised so much of government in the last 18 years. In keeping with its free-market ideology, Britain allowed the market to rip, and captains to sell their boats and quotas to the highest bidder, often from abroad. All the other countries made full use of the EU compensation scheme, forking out the 30 per cent and so virtually none of their quotas were sold abroad. So how, all of a sudden, is Brussels to blame for British fishermen's lost quotas?

But what, exactly, is Major proposing? If we bought back the quotas sold abroad we would have to offer well above the current market price to persuade foreign owners to sell. And we would have to offer the same high price to any British fishermen too, so there might be a stampede to sell. The British government would end up in the absurd position of having bought itself a nationalised fishing fleet at an astronomical price.

The fishermen are naturally outraged at the prospect of any cuts – but their anger has been misdirected at Brussels, with much deft encouragement from the Euro-sceptics. Remember the bizarre sight of canary-clad Teresa Gorman on a Cornish trawler? In fact there are virtually the same number of British fishermen as there were 20 years ago, and the same tonnage of British-owned ships. (Astonishingly, we allowed the number of fishing boats to increase in the late Eighties, despite EU conservation policy.) But not so the fish. They are dying out,



Polly Toynbee
Commentator of the Year
The government could end up in the absurd position of having bought itself a nationalised fleet at an inflated price

and no one doubts that there is a crisis. In the last 30 years the amount of cod in the North Sea has come down by two-thirds, plaice by half, and haddock by three-quarters.

John Major's last stand on his fish box is all empty gesture. But can Labour do any better? Yesterday in public they echoed the same sentiments: they may refuse to ratify the forthcoming IGC until quota-hopping is addressed. But Gavin Strang, Labour's spokesman, sounded more emollient: "We are hoping that there will be a lot of goodwill, a whole new relationship with Europe." He talks of approaching Europe with the problem and asking for help, a positive attitude in a changed climate of relations. After all, it is not Labour's fault that Britain has sold so much of its quota. For the EU to put up money to buy it back would be generous indeed – but Labour's amicable attitude may achieve more than Tory sabre-rattling. At least they start with a clean slate, after the years of atrocious British behaviour.

The story of fish stands as another exemplar of our catastrophic European past. As with so much European policy, whether or not we belonged to the EU we would still have to make international agreements about fishing rights and fish conservation. Fish know no territorial limits, so one country's self-restraint is destroyed by another's overfishing. National greed, especially in conservation and pollution, can be overcome only by international agreement.

John Major's leaky policy ship was bound to be holed by the Euro-sceptic U-boats during the election. Some 200 of his mutinous crew are firing anti-European salvos in their local election campaigns in a frantic last bid for the lifeboats, even if they sink their ship. Precious few politicians of any party are making the pro-European case. And so we have an electorate grown frighteningly anti-European out of fear and ignorance.

The Europhobes fill the voters' ears with poison about the things Brussels makes us do, or stops us doing – the regulations and the red tape. But we hear little of how those same fair-trade regulations work in our favour.

Just a few recent examples: EU judgements forced the Italians to give up a luxury car tax designed to drive out British Jaguars. The Greeks were forced to let in British dealers, the Spanish our chewing gum, the Germans and Dutch our car wheels. Only air was forced to allow BA flights, France to license British ski instructors, and everyone to open public works contracts to British companies.

EU pettifoggery, nit-picking regulations that undermine national sovereignty are the stuff of free trade, if free trade is what you want. If not, then everyone else will design their own pettifoggery, nit-picking regulations to ensure that Britain is excluded from trade with them. Amid myths about straight bananas and fishermen's hennets, the essential purpose and nature of the European Union eludes a British electorate that has been uniquely misinformed and misled by cowardly politicians.

It is too much to expect Labour in mid-election to blow the European trumpet. We can only hope that afterwards they will begin the gradual process of introducing the British to the benefits of co-operation, instead of hostile confrontation. Fish will be Labour's first test of whether their gentler approach yields richer rewards.

Breaking the rules of the gentlemen's club

by Louise Jury



A woman's place in the House: candidates old and new (clockwise from top left) Barbara Follett, Clare Short, Patricia Hewitt, Margaret Hodge, Yvette Cooper, Olga Maitland, Julie Kirkbride, and Oona King

Women are poised to gain more power in Parliament than ever before. The knock-on effect will be to change the House's culture

There is a rifle range and 11 bars but no crèche. The priorities in the facilities at the House of Commons say it all.

A male preserve run like a gentlemen's club, the splash of colour from a Teresa Gorman blouse, or a Harriet Harman suit was a striking variation on the ranks of navy and grey on the benches last parliament. But with a change of government now likely, another potentially far-reaching change is on the cards – for the first time, more than 100 women may be elected to the House.

There are some who can barely believe this is possible. Lesley Abela, who 17 years ago founded the 500 Group to try to get as many women as men into Parliament, says she had hoped there would be 90. "If there's 100 I'll be cracking open the champagne. I'll be over the moon," she said yesterday.

A detailed breakdown of candidates and percentage swings carried out by the campaigning organisation the Fawcett Society suggest that, on current voting intentions, women will be flexing their muscles at every stage of the legislative process in the next parliament. With an 8 per cent swing to Labour, there will be perhaps 111 women MPs – including 92 Labour and 15 Tories – out of the 659 members. A six per cent swing could still push the total over the 100 mark. And that, say women of all parties, could be "critical mass". They would be no longer the odd ones out, square feminine pegs in round male holes.

"MPs at the moment talk as if male experience is the norm," said Mary Ann Stephenson of the Fawcett Society. "Injecting the women's perspective into debates is going to be a significant breakthrough."

For the Tories, new faces likely to be having their say at Westminster include Anne McIntosh, a married lawyer, and Caroline Spelman, also married and a commercial negotiator. For Labour, there is Louise Ellman, a mother of two and Open University tutor, and Yvette Cooper, an economic journalist. Others in the running include Barbara Follett, the image consultant and wife of the novelist Ken, and Lorna Fitzsimons, the former president of the National Union of Students.

Some well-known faces are likely to disappear, of course. Edwina Currie looks vulnerable, and the Conservatives could end up with only 10 women MPs compared with 25 last time. Glenda Jackson, who swapped her acting career for Labour politics, has a fight on – against four female rivals – in Hampstead, north London.

Regardless of individual fortunes, Janet Anderson, Labour's spokeswoman on women's affairs, believes the overall effect would be huge. "First of all visually," she says. "When people turn on their

televisions they will see on our side maybe 80 or 100 women. They are less likely to feel it's run like an exclusive gentlemen's club because it won't look like one."

The knock-on effect will be to change the culture of Westminster. "Women are so used to juggling their lives that they want to put their time to best use. I think women will stand up in the Commons, say what they have to say and sit down. We may end up with a more business-like approach."

The oppressiveness of the present culture should not be underestimated. Baroness Williams, a Cabinet member in the last Labour government and now a Liberal Democrat, says women were an "endangered species" when she was first an MP.

When she returned under the SDP banner in 1981 after an 18-month absence, she was reminded what an "extraordinary" way it was to run the country. "It's crazy," she said. "Most women – and it has got nothing to do with ability – find that atmosphere intolerable."

A system where the method of discussion is highly adversarial and where most of the votes take place after 10pm is not one that appeals to many women, she believes. And it is difficult to reconcile with having a family.

By contrast, Scandinavian parliaments are saner, calmer places making better long-term decisions, not because the Scandinavians are better than the British but because the structure of government pays more respect to women, she says. "Men [in Britain] have made room for women, but they have not made changes for them."

Electing women will help to change the system, thereby enabling more women to get into government and revolutionise what and how decisions are reached. "I think it's going to make the country better run," says Baroness Williams.

She joins the Fawcett Society and Janet Anderson in naming a number of policy issues more likely to be addressed once women have a grip on power. No woman would set up a system of pensions based on a lifetime's ability to work when it is obvious that it will not provide for many women, they point out. Child care should move up the agenda alongside domestic violence and the health service.

Baroness Williams says: "I can remember Gro Harlem Brundtland, the [last] prime minister in Norway, saying she

knew the culture had changed when a minister asked if he could leave cabinet 10 minutes early to pick up his child. You can't imagine that happening here."

Women are not always their own best supporters. Edwina Currie points out that the Tory MP Ann Winterton opposed help for women with children going out to work because she thought they should not. And Dame Jill Knight opposed a crèche at the Commons.

But Mrs Currie is keen to emphasise the "feminine touch". She worked with the Ministry of Defence, not on tanks and weapons, but on Army housing, Gulf war syndrome and bullying. "The armed forces approach is macho. I took an interest in a different way, in a different tone."

She predicts women would take strength in numbers and adopt a "more militant attitude" to issues affecting women and children, and that the "chaps won't feel able to laugh and push-punch" anything women said.

This has certainly been the habit of some in the past. The Tory MP David Evans, in one of his more controversial outbursts, made his contempt for his female colleagues clear. Women in Parliament were "usually ordinary", he said. They were promoted even when "dead from the neck upwards".

Lesley Abela says she suspected many of the new crop of women would be very good, not least because they would have had to fight particularly hard to get there. But as the numbers increased, the women would be like the men – some brilliant, others less so, a reflection of the population they represented.

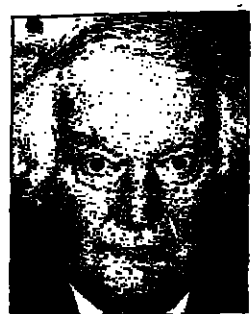
However, ordinary or not, the point is that women's voices will finally make themselves heard at Westminster. "We're well on the way now. But we can't sit back yet. One hundred down, 200 more to go."

The Angela factor floors Poor John

The Tory party could do without the two Angelas. First, Mrs Browning, a junior agriculture minister, disgraced the government by signing a European single currency, that the party should "wait and see". Unable to resist playing the "patriotic card", she embarrasses the Prime Minister, who is forced publicly to give her the benefit of the doubt.

No sooner has one Angela lapsed into obscurity than yet another, this time Dame Angela Rumbold, no less, the Tory party's vice chairman in charge of candidates, comes out with a resounding attack on the whole notion of a common currency. "Poor John" was sheepishly obliged to let her off lightly. He found a form of words to claim she did not quite mean what she said all too clearly said.

What would happen were John Redwood, Michael Portillo, Michael Howard and Peter Lilley to write in the same vein? Will their election addresses contain a patriotic defence of the British way of life? Leaving aside the debate on Europe which has been permitted to go by default, John Major cannot sack members of his Cabinet half way through an election campaign. He will quite simply have to grin and bear it. He



Julian Critchley
What a shame that Heseltine is silent and that the party has not had leadership on Europe

would be made to look a fool, and the party's divisions made even more apparent.

Yesterday's papers were full of exultant headlines. The Daily Telegraph: "Major defied as ministers break ranks"; The Times: "Tories rush into ranks of Euro-sceptics"; and The Guardian: "PM ducks sacking rebel ministers". Even Michael Forsyth, a cabinet minister, has lined up with the Euro-sceptics. But he is likely to lose his seat.

If it has not been "sleaze", it has been disunity. Sexual misbehaviour is of no importance, save to the families of the MP concerned. If Piers Merchant was a fool, then the editor of The Sun was a knave in offering a 17-year-old "night-club hostess" £50,000 in order to ensure him. What is more important is the activity of public relations companies like Ian Greer Associates in recruiting various officers of the Tory backbench trade and industry committee to do their dirty work for them.

What has happened to the old Tory party? Did it vanish with the coming of Margaret Thatcher?

In the 1960s, Profumo and Lambton made love for fun, not money. Today, David Mellor takes the media by storm. It used to be remarked when I was first elected in 1959, that

Tory scandals were sexual; Labour ones financial. Eighteen years of office have seen a series of Tory MPs embrace them both with cheerful alacrity. Why?

There are several reasons. In the first instance, the old ballast of the party is long dead and buried. MPs who entered Parliament as an extension of their sense of social obligation, or who had distinguished wartime records, were honourable men. They would not have touched the Greens of this world with a barge pole. If they wished to influence government policy, they went to see their whips, or the minister himself.

Secondly, the long years of government have seen a sea-change in the kind of Tory who gets himself elected. The upper and the educated classes have withdrawn, by and large, from constituency activity, leaving the choice of candidate to the second-rate. It is hardly surprising that the "new Conservatives" looked into the mirror and plumped for their own reflection.

Thirdly, it is now the case that almost every Tory MP wants to become a minister, which was certainly not so in the 1940s and 1950s. Today, when unprompted, they get bored. Although the parliamentary salary and allowances

have increased steadily over the years, most MPs attempt to double their income, some by writing (as I have done), others by taking advantage of the blandishments of lobbyists.

The same might be true of the Labour Party, but no lobbyist would hire a Labour MP to influence a Tory minister, and the media seems to have turned a blind eye to the peccadilloes of members of the People's Party. If Labour is returned to office, the situation will quickly change.

The saddest thing about the Tory campaign is not the gimmicky – chickens stuffed with out-of-work actors – but the way in which the case for European integration has been permitted to go by default.

We threaten Europe with non-cooperation yet still expect them to meet our point of view over fish and beef. Not since the Prime Minister said in 1992 that "Britain should stand at the heart of Europe" has there been a concerted effort to make the case for a common currency. Only Ken Clarke can claim credit for a robust defence of a development which it must be in Britain's interest to join. Could a Britain isolated from Europe stand alone as a trading nation in a world dominated by the euro, the yen, and the dollar, to say nothing of China and the

countries of the Pacific rim? The question has only to be posed for the answer to become obvious.

What do we get instead? A defeatism reminiscent of Vichy. In which spa will a Portillo-led Tory opposition make its headquarters? Will it be Leamington, Bath or Cheltenham? We are treated to those two old buzz-words "identity" and "sovereignty". Even were there to be a United States of Europe, France would remain French, the Netherlands Dutch, Italy Italian, England and Wales were joined in 1536. Has any Eurosceptic ever been to Cardiff Arms Park to see England play Wales?

And as for sovereignty, it is a commodity like any other. By joining Nato we relinquished our power to decide between peace and war. By transferring a proportion of our gold reserves to a central bank in Frankfurt, we will share sovereignty, not lose it. What a shame it is that Malcolm Rifkind has replaced Douglas Hurd, that Michael Heseltine remains silent on this issue, and that the Tory party has not had the leadership over Europe that it deserves.

Sir Julian Critchley was, until the Dissolution, Tory MP for Aldershot.

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The size of compensation for tobacco victims is only a part of the wider settlement problem. The headline figure of \$300bn over 25 years is based on the sort of settlement already proposed by Liggett Group, and as such is fairly meaningless.

Uncertainty will drag on for tobacco industry

The only thing that can be stated with certainty about the giant tobacco settlement now under negotiation in the US is that its outcome is so uncertain and legally complex that it will be many years before we know for sure whether it's a runner or not. Oh, and there is one other thing: the main beneficiaries will, as always, be the lawyers.

That being said, there is no doubt about the industry's urgent need to settle. The cost of litigation in the US is estimated at some \$600m a year at the moment and rising. That, it ought to be understood, is just the cost of success, for the industry thus far has been largely triumphant in seeing off the litigants. Just imagine how the sums will escalate once the industry starts to lose.

The size of compensation for tobacco victims is only a part of the wider settlement problem. The headline figure of \$300bn over 25 years quoted by the *Wall Street Journal* yesterday is based on the sort of settlement already proposed by Liggett Group, and as such is fairly meaningless. The Liggett formula, of approximately a quarter of revenue, spread across the industry equates to this sort of sum. Gobsacking though such numbers undoubtedly are, they achieve nothing from a public policy perspective if unaccompanied by a deal that also brings tobacco under much tougher regulatory control.

All that would happen is that the costs of servicing past "victims" would be paid for through higher prices to future addicts. The benefit of settlement would all be one way,

and that would be towards the industry. What the White House is after is a deal that would address the wider problem of present and future generations of smokers, those fully aware of tobacco's dangers, as well as those already unwittingly damaged by the habit.

Again, this is no simple matter. To bring tobacco under the control of the Food and Drug Administration would require root and branch reform. As things stand, all products approved by the FDA are by definition "safe". It is not allowed to licence harmful substances. Furthermore, to make tobacco a prescribed drug would be to destroy the industry and make it incapable of meeting the liability of present compensation claims.

As President Bill Clinton is about to find out, the Middle East peace talks have got nothing on this.

Imro shows poor judgement

No-one would disagree that the Peter Young scandal was anything but a gross failure of management on the part of Morgan Grenfell's top brass, one which deserves harsh and public punishment. Few, however, could agree that Imro's findings yesterday, and the record fine handed down by the regulator, are a satisfactory outcome to this grubby and unhappy affair.

As to the quantum of the fine, £2m is neither here nor there to Deutsche Bank, Mor-

gan's parent, and the impact of the levy, albeit the biggest under the Financial Services Act, was rightly shrugged off by analysts yesterday. It may be that the damage to Morgan's business of its time in the stocks is punishment enough, but a fine of less than 1 per cent of the black hole left by Mr Young's dealings means the punishment hardly fits the crime.

The real problem with Imro's judgement, however, lies in the questions it leaves unanswered. The fact that the regulator has yet to reach any conclusions about the individuals responsible for the debacle is a telling admission that it is in no position properly to judge the seriousness of the offence. The level of the fine therefore becomes an entirely arbitrary judgement, as does Imro's claim yesterday that the compensation Morgan offered its 90,000 investors last December was fair and equitable.

If Imro hasn't yet reached the conclusion of its deliberations, the question ought to be asked as to why it has chosen the middle of the election campaign to throw its weight around in such a high-profile manner. A cynic would say it must have something to do with the ambitions of Imro's chief executive, Phillip Thorpe, keen to prove himself not at all averse to playing public handball just ahead of the incoming Labour administration's restructuring of the City's various regulatory bodies.

Unfair or not, the point was being widely made in the City yesterday. Imro's posturing aside, one thing is for sure – the future does not look bright for Mr Young's sup-

ports, at least one of whom, the regulator believes, knew Morgan was selling dodgy trusts a full five months before the balloon finally went up. They can expect harsh, even brutal treatment, as well.

Again the regulator can hardly be blamed for wanting to make an example of those who perhaps thoroughly deserve their fate. The case could equally well be argued the other way, that far from being too hard Mr Thorpe is being too lenient. He might, for instance, have stripped Morgan Grenfell Asset Management of its licence. The problem with City regulation as it now stands is that the process is too opaque and arbitrary to know.

Look at what's under the economic froth

No single indicator can deliver a cast-iron assessment of the state of the economy. Recoveries are always patchy, and different bits of evidence always need to be weighed up against each other. But there could be no clearer sign of economic froth than the break-neck expansion of two particular types of retailer: the luxury coffee bars where a cappuccino will set you back nearly £2, and the speciality candle shop. Remember the Filofax accessories and Belgian chocolate shopping spree in the late Eighties?

The row about fiddled unemployment figures yesterday was a red herring. It is certainly true that the decline in joblessness has

not been as precipitous as the headline claimant count figures would suggest. But that does not mean that the labour market has not got tighter. The alternative, and more reliable, Labour Force Survey figures show a drop in unemployment during the past year about three-quarters the size of the decline in the number of claimants. That is still a big, and welcome, fall. The ultimate test of whether the economy is booming, though, is whether the pace of activity is producing a steady stream of new jobs. Are enough exotic coffees, scented beeswax candles and other goodies being sold in high streets up and down the land, or at least the South-east, to overstimulate consumer spending? Do higher pay and free building society shares make higher borrowing costs a must?

The most ominous sign that the answer is yes lies in the sudden upward scamper in average earnings growth. It has climbed from 4 per cent to 5 per cent since October.

Even those in the economics fraternity who believe everything in the economy is just fine are not, when you really look at their position, walking their talk; at the same time as talking down the boom, their money is on the emergence of more inflationary pressures. Every single one of the 45 economic forecasts listed by the Treasury predicts that base rates will be higher by the end of this year, including all the City forecasters who insist that the recovery is not all that strong. These economists, cappuccino drinkers to a man, cannot all be wrong.

Regan debates whether to open hostilities

Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

Andrew Regan's Lanica Trust was locked in meetings with its advisers yesterday as it pondered whether to launch a full-scale bid for parts of the Co-operative Wholesale Society or back off completely. A decision could come as early as today.

Following the publication of the CWS results on Monday, Lanica is under pressure to make a decision soon as it would need to open hostilities ahead of the general election.

A Labour government would almost certainly spell the end to Mr Regan's chances as it would take a tough stance on any Co-op break-up bid. There are 16 Co-op-sponsored Labour MPs and six of them have already laid down an Early Day Motion to oppose Lanica's approach. The motion described him as an asset-stripper backed by little-known companies in Monte Carlo and was signed by 47 Labour MPs.

Mr Regan is known to be prepared to back off rather than press ahead if his chances seem futile. His advisers costs have so far been relatively low but these would rise exponentially if his "bid" went live.

One possible avenue of attack would be to call a special meeting if Mr Regan can secure the backing of 10 of the CWS's 300 corporate members.

There was speculation yesterday that Lanica Trust believes

it already owns part of the Co-operative Wholesale Society following a deal three years ago in which Mr Regan bought the Co-op's food manufacturing division.

Sources close to Lanica were said to believe that when Mr Regan's former business, Hobson, acquired the Co-op's FE Barber subsidiary in 1994, it came with membership rights of

the CWS. Though Hobson was sold to Hilldown Holdings in late 1995, speculation suggested that Mr Regan found a way of separating the CWS membership rights from the business.

This means that if the CWS rejected Mr Regan's approach but later sold parts of its operations to another bidder, Lanica Trust would benefit from any distribution of the proceeds.

However David Lyons, Mr Regan's right-hand man, who is a director of Lanica and a former director of Hobson, yesterday denied that Mr Regan had retained any residual rights.

The CWS said yesterday: "It isn't possible to be a corporate member of the CWS without us knowing about it. You have to be a regional society registered under the Friendly Societies

Act." The spokesman said Mr Regan had only "bought some factories and that doesn't make him a member".

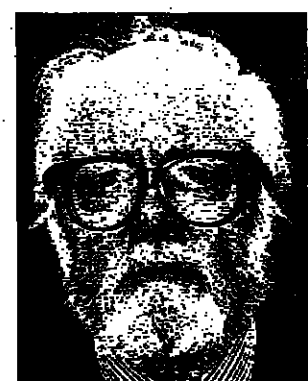
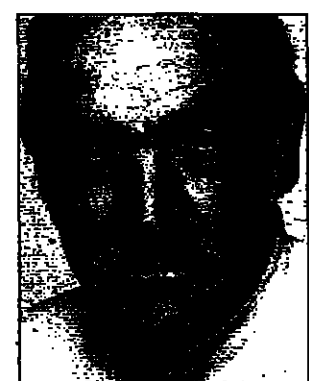
Hilldown Holdings said it had no knowledge of the Co-op food manufacturing business ever having CWS membership rights. It said it was not aware of the issue appearing in any of the Hobson documentation.

It is possible that this speculation is part of the mis-information surrounding the Lanica "bid". The whole issue has been conducted in the midst of what Graham Melmoth, CWS chief executive, has described as "black propaganda".

Mr Melmoth has said that even if Lanica receives sufficient backing to call a special meeting it would be outvoted by an overwhelming majority.

The CWS annual meeting takes place in Manchester next month. Lanica will not have a motion supporting its approach on the agenda. However there are thought to be several motions backing the CWS's stance and the continuation of its co-operative tradition.

Lanica Trust was thought to be waiting for the publication of the CWS results on Monday before finalising its plans. These showed a drop in trading profits from the non-banking operations. The poorest performer was the food retailing operations where profits were hit by a poor performance in Scotland after Tesco's takeover of William Low increased competition.



Part of the family: (from left) Betty Boothroyd; Bill Owen; Peter Bottomley; Sue Pollard; Sean Connery; and Lord Attenborough

'The first stepping-stone to a professional career'

What do Sue Pollard, Lord Attenborough, Peter Bottomley, Compo, Betty Boothroyd, Sean Connery, Alan Bennett, Seamus Heaney, Michael Palin, and it is rumoured, Maureen Lipman, and Alan Rickman have in common? They could, in a small way, help decide the fate of the Co-op, writes Chris Hughes.

As Co-op members, they and 8 million others elect the CWS board who will have to sit in judgement on Andrew Regan, if he ever gets around to bidding for the business.

"My mother was a member of the Co-op, of course. Where I came from, everyone was, except the Tories," says Bill Owen, who plays Compo in *Last of the Summer Wine*. "The Co-op was the first stepping stone to a professional career."

Peter Bottomley, the Conservative MP for Epsom, has been a Co-op member for 22 years. Sean Connery was a Co-op milkman and Sue Pollard, star of *Hi-de-Hi*, was once a check-out girl in the Nottingham Co-op.

Lord Attenborough's parents were

members in Leicester and he adjudicated the annual Co-operative Queen contest. Michael Palin's big break came when he won best gentleman's performance in the 1962 Leeds Co-op drama festival. Betty Boothroyd recalls her mother using part of the "divi", the members' dividend payment, to pay for her first dancing lessons.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society is not a simple organisation. It is made up of 51 independent Co-operative retailers, or "societies" and a handful of co-operative retailers owned directly by

the CWS, each of which elects a representative to sit on the CWS board. "It's fearfully complicated. You would never set up an organisation like this today. But we are the victim of our history," said Iain Williamson of the Co-op Union.

It costs £1 to become a Co-op member, which grants them a share of the annual profits and the right to vote each other to their society's board. Martin Henderson, CWS spokesman, said: "It's like the general election. A £1 share buys you a voting right

to elect a representative. It can't be used to overturn the government or change what's in progress.

"An offer of cash to members to demutualise would really only be effective if they were on the board. And it can take up to three years for a member to make their way up to the board," he says.

Mr Regan's proposals would need the approval of 75 per cent of the CWS board's members. They would in turn need the support of 75 per cent of the board of their own society.

IN BRIEF

Industrial output surges in US

Industrial output in the US jumped by 0.9 per cent last month, taking its annual growth to an impressive 5.6 per cent. Capacity usage in industry rose to 84.1 per cent from 83.6 per cent. The surprise surge was due to a broad-based expansion in manufacturing production, led by computers (output up 2.7 per cent in March), electrical machinery (up 2.0 per cent) and cars (up 1.5 per cent). Manufacturing output as a whole was a whopping 6.7 per cent higher than a year earlier. Analysts said the figures were a clear sign of the economy's strength. Nevertheless, Wall Street appeared calm about the latest evidence of robust growth. The Dow Jones Index was up nearly 20 points at 6,606.83 by midday.

BAe shares in orders worth \$1.7bn

British Aerospace celebrated a double bonus yesterday after sharing in aircraft orders worth \$1.7bn. Airbus Industrie, in which Bae has a 20 per cent stake, won orders worth \$1.5bn for A330 jets from Swissair and Sabena of Belgium. Meanwhile Al(R), the regional aircraft consortium in which Bae has a one-third stake, secured a \$200m order from the US domestic carrier American Eagle for 12 ATR72 turboprops.

Guinness boss gets £100,000 pay rise

Tony Greener, chairman of Guinness, eschewed previous profit-related bonus payments in favour of a £100,000 salary rise to £700,000, according to the latest accounts from the brewing and international spirits group. Benefits and other perks took his total salary package to £751,000 last year, up from £704,000 in 1995. Guinness saw pre-tax profits rise by 11 per cent to £975m in 1996.

Eurostar targets business passengers

Eurostar is launching a first-class service designed to compete head-on with the airlines for business passengers. From 28 April it will offer a Premium First service costing £370 return – the same as a full-fare business-class airline ticket. Passengers get free taxis at either end, fast-lane check-in desks and a four-course meal.

Hepworth sells refractories business

Hepworth, the drainage pipes to boilers group, has sold its refractories operation to Alpine Group of the US for £62.5m. Hepworth Refractories, which makes heat-resistant bricks and other products used in the metal, glass and cement industries, was put up for sale last October.

Cobham reveals European ambitions

Cobham is looking to play a "pro-active" role in the consolidation of the European defence industry and hopes the proposed sale of the French government's 58 per cent stake in Thomson-CSF will provide spin-off opportunities. Gordon Page, chief executive, said after announcing a surge in the company's annual pre-tax profits from £29.8m to £43.7m: "I wish it was as easy to do business in Europe as it is in the US."

Investment column, page 24

Oftel moves herald mobile shake-out

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Don Cruickshank, the telecommunications regulator, yesterday moved to relax restrictions on mobile phone operators, heralding a shake-out in the industry which could speed up price reductions for customers.

The changes, which apply as soon as possible to the two newest networks, Orange and One2One, will give companies more flexibility over how they sell airtime to consumers. Traditionally mobile companies have sold through service providers, businesses which buy blocks of wholesale airtime and sell it to customers. Vodafone and Cellnet were forced to sell through service providers in the mid-Eighties to encourage price competition while the market was controlled by the two networks.

The move comes as competition between the four mobile

networks is stiffening, with recent figures showing Orange and One2One have this year been unexpectedly growing faster than Vodafone or Cellnet.

Mr Cruickshank said he would also free these older networks from restrictions, though he was unlikely to conduct a review until 1998. Vodafone and Cellnet still have the bulk of the UK's 7 million customers. He was still concerned at the high cost of making mobile calls and wanted to see speedier progress towards number portability, where customers could keep their number if they switched networks.

Analysts said the changes confirmed the trend towards the networks buying up service providers, including Vodafone's recent purchase of People's Phone. Jim McCafferty, from stockbrokers Hoare Govett, said: "The days of independent service providers appear to be numbered."

JJB gets set to win a younger market

Nigel Cope

JJB Sports is considering opening a nationwide chain of sports shops aimed at two to 10 year olds after a successful trial of two stores in Halifax and Lincoln.

The stores are called JJB Future Stars and sell branded sportswear such as Nike sweat shirts and Reebok training shoes aimed at fashion-conscious youngsters and their parents.

The stores have opened in the last few weeks and have been trading strongly. Four more will open in the next month including shops in Bolton and Altrincham. If they mirror the success of the first two stores then JJB will consider converting its smaller stores to the Future Stars format as it concentrates its adult ranges in larger superstores.

JJB's chairman, Dave Whelan, said: "The results so far have been very good. We will wait and see how it goes but if

necessary we will roll the format out."

The stores will stock Nike and Reebok training shoes to fit even a two year old. Prices are high with an Ellesse sweat shirt priced at £17.99.

Britain's large sports shops have enjoyed soaring sales on the back of the huge popularity of branded sportswear. This has come as retailers of traditional childrenswear such as Adams and Mothercare have been experiencing weak sales.

Some City analysts expressed concern at JJB's latest move, saying it was a difficult market. But Mr Whelan said it was a low risk strategy as the stores currently trading as Future Stars are former branches of JJB Sports which had been closed but proved difficult to sell. He said the re-fit costs were just £25,000 per store. JJB will open its new superstore on London's Oxford Street on 25 April.

Investment column, page 24

Bre-X bosses netted millions on shares

Jim Levi

Directors of Bre-X Minerals, the troubled Canadian mining firm, made millions of dollars from share-dealings last year when the stock price was riding high, it emerged yesterday.

While the top directors at Bre-X Minerals lost a fortune on paper when the share price crashed last month, official records show that they did cash in on the strength of what now appear to be outrageous estimates of the size of gold reserves on its Indonesian exploration drilling.

Transactions recorded by the Ontario Securities Commission

in Toronto reveal that between April and September last year, the company's founder and president, David Walsh, sold 300,000 shares at an average price of around C\$25 netting about C\$7.5m (£3.3m).

Share-trading activity by John Felderhof, his Dutch geologist partner and vice-chairman who in 1993 first persuaded him to buy into the now notorious Busing concession, was on an even more aggressive scale.

In one day alone – on 19 April 1996 – Mr Felderhof sold C\$5.5m worth of shares in separate lots of about 2,000 shares when the price was trading at around C\$170 (equivalent to

C\$15.45 after a subsequent share split). Last night the shares were selling at C\$217.

In all Mr Walsh, his wife Jeannette, Mr Felderhof, his wife Ingrid, John Thorpe the company's treasurer, vice-president Steve McNulty and his wife Nancy and another vice-president, Rolando Francisco, cashed in over C\$100m worth of shares from April to September last year.

This was at the time the company claimed that Busing might be the biggest gold mine in the world – up to 200 million ounces worth £30bn – were doing the rounds of world stock markets.

According to reports in the *Northern Miner*, the North American mining newspaper, Michael de Guzman, Bre-X chief geologist, who reportedly jumped to his death from a helicopter near the Busing prospect, could have "netted" himself several million dollars had he cashed in his share options when the price was at its peak.

The Ontario Securities Commission, Toronto Stock Exchange and Alberta Securities Commission began its investigation into Bre-X to gather information to enable staff to assess whether there is evidence for formal proceedings.

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JJB in 1996

Bodycote acquisitions turn up heat

Bodycote International and its chairman, Joe Dwek, are two of the more successful remnants of the ill-fated Slater Walker empire of the 1970s. They owe much of their good fortune to a management team led by chief executive John Chesworth, who has successfully re-engineered the group over the last 18 years or so. The last of the original textile interests – a bullet-proof vest manufacturer – was dumped earlier this month and through a series of acquisitions Mr Chesworth has created one of the biggest independent metal heat treatment groups in the UK.

That helped it yesterday to reveal a 46 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £27.6m for 1996. If analysts' forecasts of £46m for the current year are right, the figure will have multiplied by over 10 times in 11 years. The market has taken time to recognise these achievements, but, after a 32.5p rise to 770p yesterday, the shares are nearly double their price 18 months ago, putting them on a forward multiple of 19.

This sort of heady rating is normally accorded companies at the leading edge of technology, yet Mr Chesworth is the first to acknowledge that his is neither a hi-tech or highly priced line of work, describing Bodycote as a plant hire business that sells time on its furnaces. But its equipment has proved itself more efficient and more reliable than others.

Heavy capital investment, set to almost double to £37.6m this year, has helped Bodycote grab a significant share of the market for heat treating other manufacturers' components in every industry from aerospace to electric hand tools, giving them hardness and durability. There is still plenty more to go for. Bodycote reckons it has less than a fifth of an outsourced UK market put at £100m, while three-quarters of heat treatment work is still carried out in-house.

Despite the modesty of Mr Chesworth's description, Bodycote has some fairly whizzy businesses. Its commanding position in hot isostatic processing takes it into high-integrity applications like aero-engine blades.

The outlook for the 18 per cent of the group's sales into the currently booming aerospace industry is set fair, while automotive, a further 22 per cent of the business, is looking reasonable, at least in the Anglo-Saxon countries. But the main short-term excitement at Bodycote remains acquisition-led.

Last year it spent £112m, including debt, on 10 purchases, culminating in Brukens of Sweden, making it one of Europe's biggest heat treatment groups. Around three-quarters of last year's profits growth came from acquisitions and analysts expect Brukens to chip in over £10m to this year's figures. It is targeting heat treatment and laboratory testing companies in the US and talking to some, backed by £20m

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

of net cash which could give it up to £80m in firepower.

Well clear of last November's rights issue at 600p, the shares are a firm hold as one of the select band of high-growth engineering companies.

JJB figures set more records

The quoted sports retailers have been having a high old time of it recently. Buoyed by the increasing popularity of branded sportswear and helped by the fragmented ownership of sports shops, the likes of JJB Sports, JD Sports and Blacks Leisure have been enjoying huge profits growth and soaring share prices.

JJB Sports, the chain founded by former footballer Dave Whelan in 1971, confirmed the growth trend yesterday with another bumper set of figures. Profits were 58 per cent ahead at £20.3m for the year to 31 January. Even more impressive were the like-for-like sales figures, which grew by an astonishing 38 per cent over the year and are also up strongly in current trading.

However, the latest 11 weeks are being set against a weak comparable period for last year when bad weather affected sales.

JJB is certainly an impressive story and the shares have now risen more than sixfold since the flotation in late 1994. They jumped another 5p yesterday to close at a record high of 425p. It now has 167 stores and opened 25 new superstores over the year and a further eight since the year-end. Next year it will open 39 more outlets.

The company has abandoned its experiment in Spain and is closing its three stores at a cost of £387,000. More ambitious, however, is the plan to convert some of the smaller stores to a new format aimed at children aged two to 10.

Called Future Stars, the plan is to capitalise on the market for junior replica kits and tiny training shoes. This has raised some eyebrows in the City as this is seen as a risky market.

While the JJB tale is obviously an impressive story, the problem for potential investors is its rather frightening rating.

On forecast profits of £27m, the shares trade on a prospective price-earnings ratio of 23, which is higher

than its rivals JD Sports and substantially more than Blacks Leisure, which is on a rating of 16. JJB is clearly a quality company but there may be better value elsewhere.

Cobham steps on road to recovery

Cobham is a good case study in the investment roller-coaster companies can ride if they disappoint a market that has fallen in love with their strategy. Eighteen months ago the market's perception of the aerospace and precision engineering group was transformed by its £75m acquisition of Westwind, which took it into the semiconductor market for the first time.

Its shares almost doubled in a year, jumping to a sizeable premium to the market, but disappointment at the new acquisition's progress has left the shares in limbo since.

Yesterday the company set out on the road to recovery with a 47 per cent increase in profits before tax to £43.7m and 24 per cent rise in earnings per share coming in bang in line with analysts' expectations. More importantly, Cobham had an impressive order book to show the City and good news to tell on Westwind's progress, which sent the shares 35p higher to 652.5p, close to the 669.5p high reached at the end of last year.

Although sales of its air bearing spindles, used to control the manufacture of printed circuit boards, have been slower to materialise than brokers hoped it now looks as if once they get going volumes will be much higher than previously thought. New applications for the technology, such as the manufacture of scanning devices, look to have good potential as well and initial expectations that Westwind could grow profits at 20 per cent a year have been resurrected.

Westwind is only a small part of the group as a whole, so more important in anything other than sentiment terms was the slow of new orders last year, such as contract awards for the British Aerospace Nimrod 2000 maritime patrol aircraft and the GEC Phoenix battlefield surveillance system. Initial deliveries were also made for a tanker conversion programme for Boeing.

With the core defence business arguably in much better shape than a year ago, it would not be unreasonable for Cobham's shares to recover the premium rating they lost last summer. On the basis of forecast profits before tax of £49m this year and £55.5m next time the shares trade on a price/earnings ratio of 18, falling to 16. That accounts for most of the good news, but analysts believe the recovery could continue to as much as 700p in the medium term. Good value.

Strong sterling alarms Reed and Reuters

Magnus Grimond

Further concerns over the strength of sterling were voiced by two of Britain's biggest companies yesterday when Reuters and Reed Elsevier warned that the currency could have a significant impact on profits this year.

Peter Job, Reuters' chief executive, told shareholders attending the electronic information group's annual meeting that both profits and earnings would be virtually static in the first half of 1997 if the pound continued at current levels. The news pushed the shares down 8p at one stage, before recovering to end the day 3p lower at 589p.

First-quarter revenues have been cut by 2 per cent to £699m by currency factors, but underlying sales growth in the first three months was 8 per cent and

Reuters said there had been no impact on the fundamental business.

"Sterling's strength continues to have a negative impact on our reported figures", Mr Job said. "Meanwhile, the business is performing much as we expected. We mainly invoice in local currency all over the world so sterling exchange rate movements are not having any impact on unit sales."

Fears over the impact of translating overseas profits into a higher sterling were echoed at Reed's annual meeting yesterday. Ian Irvine, chairman of Reed International, the British-quoted end of the business, told shareholders that if sterling maintained its current strength against most other currencies it would have a "marked effect" on the reported results, particularly in the first six months to June 30 from 1996.

But, like Reuters, he tempered his remarks by adding that the negative effect of currency translation did not affect the underlying operating performance of the group. "Overall, the businesses continued to perform well," he said.

Reuters also warned yesterday that computer problems related to the switch to the year 2000 was hampering its efforts to develop new products. Mr Job said this effect of the change of date on existing software was a serious issue with a lot of work to be done and we will eat up some effort that would usually go in to new product development.

Reuters was unable to report any progress on plans to reinstate last year's share buy-back, which was derailed by a last-minute tax change from the Chancellor Kenneth Clarke.

Scramble expected for shares in Aston Villa

Jim Levi

A frantic goalmouth scramble for shares in Aston Villa looks in prospect despite the end-of-season blues afflicting the shares of most quoted soccer clubs.

Villa, fourth in the Premier League, is the latest to join the City's growing list of stock market entrants and today's prospectus will detail plans to raise between £15m and £20m with the placing of new shares.

The listing is expected to value the company at up to £140m. Financial institutions have promised to put up the bulk of the new money. But Villa fans, who include 20,000 season ticket holders, have been earmarked about 25 per cent of the new equity on offer. Among

those season ticket holders are Tony Hales, chief executive of drinks giant Allied Domecq, and Mervyn King, economics director of the Bank of England. Mr Hales is joining the Villa board as a non-executive.

The biggest club in Birmingham, Villa has been a consistent performer at the top of English soccer, winning the Coca-Cola Cup twice in the past five years and playing in European competition in three out of the past four seasons.

That consistency is reflected in the financial results. The club has made profits in all but one of the past 10 years. Thanks to healthy gate receipts and television deals, operating profits last year, before net spending on new players, reached £6.1m on turnover of £18.8m.

Separately, the rival West Bromwich Albion club in the West Midlands, quoted on AIM, yesterday announced a sharp upturn in half-year profits from £129,000 to £301,000. The shares, however, at £200 each are well down from their recent peak of £280.

Interim results were also released by Caspian Group, owner of Leeds United, that reflected the impact of net spending of £7.9m on transfer fees. Despite raising £5.3m from the sale of children's TV rights in Puddington Bear, Junior Jungle and the Shoe People, the group made an after-tax loss of £2.65m. Attendances seem to be holding up well and television revenues showed a marked increase following a better deal between the League and BSkyB.

IN BRIEF

Losses at Blockways worsen to £2.7m

Blockways, the building materials group, reported a deepening of pre-tax losses from £581,000 to £2.71m for 1996, and warned it was being affected by a continuing decline in construction activity, coupled with falling selling prices. "Industry stocks remain at over £1.1bn, representing over 20 weeks' supply at current demand levels, which will add further pressure on the pricing policy in the industry," a company spokesman said.

J&J to offload Biocompatibles shares

Johnson & Johnson wants to sell 1 million shares in Biocompatibles International, which will reduce its stake from 6.4 to 4.3 per cent. J&J's planned disposal follows the release last month of the lock-up provisions entered into by the main shareholders at the time of Biocompatibles' flotation a year ago.

Capital Radio sells television studio

Capital Radio has agreed to sell its television studio, Capital Studios, to Prospect Media Group for £2.5m cash. In addition, Capital Studios has paid a pre-completion dividend to Capital Radio of £1.35m. Capital Radio will invest £1m in Prospect in return for a 20 per cent shareholding in the enlarged Prospect group. For the year ended 30 September, Capital Studios generated a profit before tax of £60,000 on turnover of £2.6m.

Ceramic supplier's shares flare

Shares in Flare Group jumped by 11p to 140.5p after the industrial ceramics supplier released better-than-expected full-year figures. Pre-tax profits leapt from £800,000 to £3.3m. The company said it hoped to expand further this year.

Stagecoach to sell Swebus Norge

Stagecoach Holdings announced the sale of Swebus Norge to Norgebus Invest for £7.9m. Swebus Norge is the holding company of the group's Norwegian operations and operates 250 buses in central Norway.

BICC signs cable venture in Thailand

BICC has signed a joint venture with Thailand's United Communications Group to make and market optical fibre communication cables in Thailand. BICC said it planned to build a £12m cable manufacturing facility in Thailand.

Pemberstone makes new offers

Pemberstone made new recommended offers worth £14.57m for First Predator Plus, Predator Three and Tamworth Assets. Agreement has also been reached for Pemberstone to make a recommended offer next month for Predator, and a separate £4.83m takeover bid for South Eastern Recovery Assured Homes.

Company Results

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
AB Holdings (F)	15.6m (14.8m)	1.44m (1.57m)	5.1p (5.2p)	2.25p (2.25p)
Bloodydays (F)	8.34m (8.72m)	-2.71m (-0.88m)	-7.41p (-1.74p)	-
Bodycote Int (F)	120.1m (80.4m)	27.8m (18.9m)	30.2p (19.7p)	7.4p (8.1p)
Bridgeport (F)	14.1m (15.6m)	0.15m (-1.23p)	0.5p (-12.3p)	0.2p (0.2p)
Complex Group (F)	12.8m (1.88m)	0.71m (-1.12m)	0.31p (1.03p)	-
Coldham (F)	297m (228m)	43.7m (29.8m)	32.5p (25.2p)	11.3p (12.08p)
Danvers (F)	-	3.61m (6.11m)	11.6p (8.6p)	4.5p (4.1p)
Flare Group (F)	37.1m (11.8m)	3.30m (1.30m)	11.6p (12.6p)	1p (0p)
Intelligent Sys (F)	14.1m (4.05m)	-1.57m (-0.20m)	-7.1p (1.1p)	-
JJB Sports (F)	131m (99.5m)	20.3m (12.0m)	14.45p (8.25p)	4.5p (2.92p)
Therapies Group (F)	3.44m (3.70m)	0.24m (0.14m)	1.07p (0.81p)	0.5125p (1.4p)
West Bromwich Albion (F)	2.40m (2.84m)	0.20m (0.13m)	4.25p (3.68p)	-

(F) - Final (I) - Interim

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Mowlem float plan to value SGB at £100m

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

John Mowlem is to float off SGB, its scaffolding subsidiary, in a share placing that will value the company at about £100m this summer. The return of SGB to the stock market comes 11 years after Mowlem bought the business for £16m, although the company said disposals since meant the two figures were not comparable.

Bob Stokell, chief executive, said: "SGB is recognised as a leader in access products, and serves a world-wide market. It has an ability to provide innovative solutions to the most complex of client demands. As an independent company, SGB will be able to develop further an already strong brand name."

SGB, founded in 1903 and floated on the stock market in 1922, is one of the world's largest companies involved in the manufacture, sale and hire of access equipment for the construction industry. As well as access products for the new build construction market, it provides scaffolding equipment for

buildings and pipeline structures in the oil, chemical and steel industries.

Mowlem will keep 51 per cent of SGB's shares after the flotation and directors will be given 50 far unspecified stakes in the business, which currently employs around 4,000 in 125 locations in 20 countries.

For the financial year to December, SGB recorded pre-tax profits of £16m (£11.7m) on turnover of £26.2m. Mr Stokell, who joined last year when Mowlem's chairman, Ken Minton, poached him from his own former company, Laporte, said he had targeted an increase in SGB's return on sales from about 6 to 10 per cent and a rise in return on assets from 10 to 18 per cent. Brokers have forecast operating profits of £18m for SGB this year.

As well as Mr Stokell, Mowlem has also appointed Stephen Yapp, former finance director of Haulage, the storage tank company.

The two plan further rationalisation of SGB's UK business, reducing its manufacturing outlets from seven to two.

CINven set to seal £1bn healthcare deal

CINven, the venture capital group hived off from British Coal, is holding exclusive talks with the French industrial conglomerate, Compagnie Generale des Eaux (CGE), which could result in a £1bn management buyout of its healthcare divisions in the UK and France, writes Chris Godsmark.

The deal, financed with a mixture of debt and equity, is easily the largest since CINven was separated from British Coal 18 months ago. It follows its financing of the management buyout of the Compass catering group's healthcare arm for £180m in 1995. CINven is thought to have beat off stiff competition for the bid, which could be sealed by the summer.

The announcement is another significant boost for the venture capital industry, which has come under the spotlight following deals to sell two privatised railway rolling stock leasing companies over the past year. Managers and venture capital backers emerged with hundreds of millions of pounds in windfall profits less than a year after the state sell-off.

CGE has already stated it expects to receive around Fr5.5bn (£900m) from the sale, which includes private hospitals in the UK through its General Healthcare company and its French operation, Generale de Santé. The sale will raise speculation that the businesses will be floated on the stock market.

business

How employment can boom without busting the economy

There has been more good news from the unemployment front this week - there is less of it than there was. No matter how flimsy the headline figures, all measures of joblessness show that the economy is growing fast enough to reduce the total.

While this news is genuinely welcome, it raises two questions. First, do further reductions in unemployment depend simply on faster growth and if so how far can this go before the next government has to put the brakes on the economy to prevent inflation rising?

Second, who is getting the new jobs? How the new jobs are shared around is as important for social reasons as how many there are.

The latest two months' worth of official statistics have set the inflation alarm ringing because they suggest that the jobless count has fallen rapidly enough to send wage inflation higher. Underlying growth in average earnings has risen to 5 per cent, which is about the highest consistent with the 2.5 per cent inflation target if the economy's long-term potential growth is about 2.5 per cent. Business surveys suggest that skill shortages have become widespread and, in the service industries in particular, employers are worried about pressure on salaries.

The conventional wisdom is therefore that the booming economy can and will take unemployment lower but it is happening alarmingly fast and stoking the inflationary fires. The economy is breaking the "speed limit" on the rate at which unemployment can safely fall.

Economists and politicians alike stress the need to reduce joblessness - especially among the young and the long-term unemployed - by "supply side" measures such as training, job search support and even the withdrawal of benefits. Few will say instead that they think there is a need to boost demand in the economy even further.

But could this conventional wisdom be wrong? A book of essays published today challenges it from a variety of left-wing perspectives, some more likely than others to win



Diane Coyle

'An accountant who sells burgers is really unemployed, argues Lord Eatwell'

converts. One of the least likely to sway the orthodox comes from Labour peer John Eatwell, who stretches the definition of unemployment to argue that there is plenty of scope for extra demand to reduce it. Following the works of eminent Cambridge economist Joan Robinson in the 1930s, Lord Eatwell argues that there is a great deal of disguised unemployment.

He defines this as all the people doing a job where their productivity is below their potential. If you are a qualified accountant but can only find work selling hamburgers

then you are really unemployed, in his view. His estimates make the "real" unemployment rate about 12 rather than 6 per cent.

If you accept this case, there is no inflationary danger in boosting demand in the economy. There are people productive, skilled and efficient enough to meet all the extra demand. They can move out of the less skilled into the more skilled jobs, and their place can be taken by the rest of the unemployed. This argument has something going for it at the depths of a recession but the essay does not address how much disguised unemployment changes over the cycle nor how low it might be now. After five years of economic recovery, it must be far lower.

A more convincing case is made in a separate essay by Peter Robinson from the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance. He points out that the reason everybody thinks falling unemployment will trigger higher pay inflation is that rising unemployment has been accompanied by sharp falls in earnings growth during the two most recent recessions. But the evidence so far is that there is an asymmetry. As the chart shows, moves in the opposite direction have not, during the past two cycles, had as big a pay response. "The fall in unemployment required to produce a given increase in wage inflation was significantly greater than the rise in unemployment required to produce a given reduction in wage inflation."

This is cheering stuff for anybody who thinks it worth boosting the economy by as much as it takes to

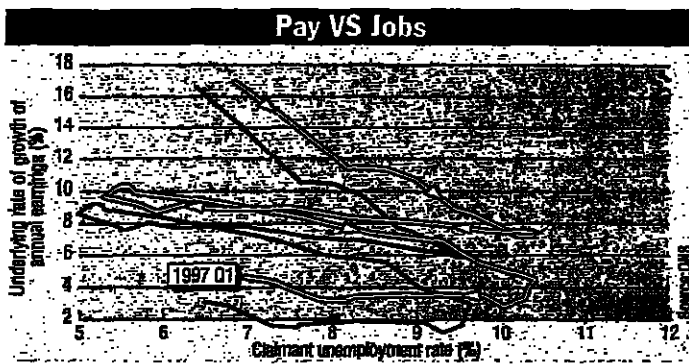
reduce joblessness even further. But Mr Robinson himself argues in favour of a slow move simply because we cannot be sure how much further it is possible to go without paying the inflationary price. We have already had a long expansion of the economy, and there have been no adverse shocks such as the oil price jumps of the 1970s for nearly two decades. "The new labour market regime in the UK has yet to be really tested," he writes.

So the conventional wisdom comes out on top. Perhaps a more useful thing to focus on, rather than the unemployment total, is the question of how work is shared out.

A report this week from the Employment Policy Institute also concluded that falling unemployment was about to crash into the inflation barrier. But even if it were not, there is a large core of "structural" unemployment that is simply not amenable to higher demand. There is nobody in work in about one in five households in Britain. Nearly two-fifths of job seekers have been out of work for more than a year - twice the size of the long-term unemployment component two decades ago. Middle-aged men's participation rate has fallen sharply since the late 1970s. And there is a lot of evidence that education and training are not fitting many young people for jobs.

The EPI reaches the conclusion that "supply side" policies are exactly what is needed to tackle these unfairnesses which, if allowed to persist, will tend to boost poverty, homelessness and crime. It favours the "welfare to work" philosophy of New Labour and the Liberal Democrats. The catch is that this probably won't work if it is done on the cheap. Director John Philpott charges all the parties with wishful thinking at best, sheer hype at worst. But at least they deserve the credit for going beyond the wishful thought that a bit of a boost for the economy will solve the problem.

'Employment and Economic Performance, ed. Jonathan Michie and John Greve, Oxford University Press, £15.99 paperback.'



Two American bakers who have gone quite barking...

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

We've had superstores for pets, insurance for pets, now stand by for Europe's first dog bakery. Beagle Bakes, Hound Dog Hearts, Pup Tarts and Big Scary Kitties are just a few of the gourmet dog foods available in a range of stores being opened in London this Friday.

The PETIMART superstore chain is, of course, the brainchild of two Americans, Dan Dye and Mark Beckloff of Kansas City, who aim to have 25 stores open world-wide by the end of the year.

Dan and Mark outline their philosophy in a book of canine recipes titled *Short Tails and Treats from Three Dog Bakery*. A flavour of the book can be gained from the introduction: "This is our own wags-to-riches story of how we came to start the world's most unique bakery - a bonified, five-paw bakery - for dogs. Ours is a Canine Confectionery, a Pooch Patisserie, a Mecca For Mutts where dogs go to see and be seen, nibble and be nibbled, sniff and be sniffed."

It's obvious that if pups were pounds, Dan's Mark would already be as rich as Warren Buffett. If you don't fancy the book, they can also be contacted via their website: <http://www.threedog.com>.

How very odd. I thought we in Britain were supposed to be living in a "post-industrial society", with all the economic expansion coming from services. Not so, according to the latest Wealth Register written by Dr Philip Beresford, which reveals details of over 5,500 millionaires in the UK.

Dr Beresford writes: "The largest grouping of British millionaires (14.3 per cent of the total worth £17bn of wealth) is to be found in industry, followed by property (12.2 per cent with £14.49bn of assets) and the City (10.5 per cent with £12.44bn of wealth)."

So all those metal bashers from "Oop North" are in fact far better off than the stripy strippers in the Square Mile. The message for ambitious Oxbridge graduates is clear: Head for Birmingham. And if you're pondering whether we're at the bursting



Taking the dog biscuit: Pooches can now enjoy bagels and tarts

point of a 1980s-style market bubble, Dr Beresford adds a worrying parallel with that dizzy decade: attitudes to wealth are returning to the "if you've got it, flaunt it" variety.

For instance, Tiny Rowland (formerly of Lloyds) phoned Dr Beresford no less than seven times to ask where he was in the rankings of the rich.

And another rich person sent Dr Beresford a photo-copy of his Nationwide pass book just to prove that he really was worth a million quid. Pass the Bolli!

Congratulations to Nigel Whitaker, once one of the City's highest paid pr men while at Kingfisher, who has popped up as UK Chairman of Burson-Marsteller, the global group of spin doctors.

Mr Whitaker trousered a hefty pay-off when he left Kingfisher in a board room reshuffle two years ago, which was prompted by a profits warning. Trained as a lawyer, he began a 13-year stint with Kingfisher in 1983 at the age of 34 as executive director responsible for corporate affairs. During that time Mr Whitaker helped fight off Dixon's hostile bid in 1986, spent four years as human resources director for

Woolworths and three years as chairman of B&Q.

A keen marathon runner, Mr Whitaker founded his own pr consultancy after leaving Kingfisher, and will continue his independent consulting activities while at Burson-Marsteller.

One of my colleagues, Jim Levi has just suggested a possible solution to the Millennium Time bomb, which is forecast to cost world business \$50bn putting their computer systems right.

The problem is that computers will be unable to distinguish between the year 2000 and the year 1900 because they have traditionally only operated using the last two digits. Thus the millennium heralds the spectre of global computer meltdown.

Jim proposes that all computers should be left to pretend that the year 2000 is really 1900, leaving us a century to sort things out.

Obviously this wouldn't work with computers holding records that actually go back to the year 1900. But there can't be too many of those, surely.

Mr Levi awaits his Nobel Prize for World Peace.

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.6221	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Canada	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Germany	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
France	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Italy	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Japan	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Spain	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Belgium	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Netherlands	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Denmark	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Sweden	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Switzerland	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Australia	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
New Zealand	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Singapore	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
Argentina	1.6221	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Australia	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Canada	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
France	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Germany	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Italy	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Japan	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Spain	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Sweden	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Switzerland	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Australia	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
New Zealand	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20
Singapore	2.2566	7.5	10.20	1000	2.2566	7.5	10.20

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount; rate quoted low to high are at a premium; *Dollar rates quote as reciprocals. For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0801 123 3033. Calls cost 50p per minute.

Interest Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate
UK	6.00%	Germany	2.50%	US	5.75%	Japan	0.50%
France	5.50%	Canada	4.50%	Spain	5.00%	Belgium	2.50%
Italy	7.50%	Denmark	3.25%	Sweden	4.00%	Netherlands	2.50%
Switzerland	2.50%	Australia	5.00%	New Zealand	5.00%	Singapore	5.00%

Bond Yields

Country	Yield	Country	Yield	Country	Yield	Country	Yield
UK	7.0%	Germany	2.5%	US	5.75%	Japan	0.5%
France	5.5%	Canada	4.5%	Spain	5.0%	Belgium	2.5%
Italy	7.5%	Denmark	3.25%	Sweden	4.0%	Netherlands	2.5%
Switzerland	2.5%	Australia	5.0%	New Zealand	5.0%	Singapore	5.0%

Money Market Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate
UK	6.00%	Germany	2.50%	US	5.75%	Japan	0.50%
France	5.50%	Canada	4.50%	Spain	5.00%	Belgium	2.50%
Italy	7.50%	Denmark	3.25%	Sweden	4.00%	Netherlands	2.50%
Switzerland	2.50%	Australia	5.00%	New Zealand	5.00%	Singapore	5.00%

Tourist Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate
UK	6.00%	Germany	2.50%	US	5.75%	Japan	0.50%
France	5.50%	Canada	4.50%	Spain	5.00%	Belgium	2.50%
Italy	7.50%	Denmark	3.25%	Sweden	4.00%	Netherlands	2.50%
Switzerland	2.50%	Australia	5.00%	New Zealand	5.00%	Singapore	5.00%

Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Gilt	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Gilt	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Euro	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Euro	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Yen	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Yen	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Life FTSE Index Options

Series	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long FTSE	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short FTSE	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Nikkei	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Nikkei	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long DAX	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short DAX	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Energy

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Oil	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Oil	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Gas	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Gas	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Coal	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Coal	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Commodity Indices

Index	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Metals	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Metals	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Grains	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Grains	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Softs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Softs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Industrial Metals

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Al	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Al	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Cu	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Cu	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Zn	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Zn	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Precious Metals

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Gold	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Gold	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Silver	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Silver	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Platinum	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Platinum	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Agricultural

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Wheat	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Wheat	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Corn	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Corn	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Soybean	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Soybean	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Other Softs

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Open	Close
Long Rubber	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Rubber	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Coffee	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Coffee	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Cocoa	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Cocoa	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Latest Unit Trust Prices

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...and facts

sport

It was pretty obvious two years ago that some did not take kindly to the progress Woods was making. His cool demeanour upset them

The first time I saw Tiger Woods five, as against catching glimpses of him on television, was at the 1995 Masters. Making his first appearance at Augusta National, barely 19 years old, invited as the US Amateur champion, he had made a tidy par at the first and was about to play the second.

Already something of a name in golf, Woods had plenty of people rooting for him. Off went the ball on its 300-yard journey and as Woods strode after it a small white boy standing alongside the fairway called out: "Go get 'em, Tiger." This was acknowledged with the smile that is now part of a multi-million dollar industry.

Woods was not the first black

man to play in the Masters but none had shown such potential. What effect, I wondered, would its realisation have on golf's white establishment, because it was pretty obvious two years ago that some did not take kindly to the progress Woods was making. Unquestionably, his cool demeanour upset them.

Asked at a news conference what the invitation meant to him, Woods replied: "The opportunity to be on a great golf course with the world's best players." Enough, but not enough for the bystander who muttered: "Just another uppity nigger."

Disgusting but hardly surprising. After all, it is not that long since the only black faces at Augusta Na-

tional were those of caddies, bar-men and locker-room attendants. Lee Trevino was made to feel so uncomfortable because of his Mexican blood that he changed in the car park.

As Woods moved closer to coronation last Sunday he thought about the handful of black players who preceded him in the Masters. "Without them none of this would have been possible," he said. It was exactly the right thing to say if only because his remarkable victory has led, inevitably you may think, to glib assumption.

To suppose that Woods has demolished social barriers in golf is to be in ignorance of prevailing influences, the irrefutable fact that



KEN JONES

there are clubs in the United States and this country where he is not guaranteed a welcome.

The guiding spirits in golf are for the most part conservative people of at least middle age. Liberal in-

stincts are not strong in them. Social issues come into this but how many clubs have more than one or two black members? How many black players do you see on the European Tour?

If, as seems likely, Woods goes on to dominate golf things may well change, but nobody should hold their breath in anticipation. After all, black success in sport has not altered the lot of black people generally.

The truth, unfortunately, is that it takes a damn sight more than sporting prowess to break down racial discrimination. Going beyond the civil rights movement as an objective, Muhammad Ali helped to internationalise black consciousness

as much as anybody. And yet a report issued in the US last week stated that America's schools are becoming as segregated as they were 40 years ago.

What did Carl Lewis's monumental athletic achievements do for the black population of his birthplace, Philadelphia? "He is a credit to his race, the human race," an American sportswriter, the late Jimmy Cannon, said famously about one of the greatest of heavy-weight champions, Joe Louis. A fine sentiment and yet said not long before a liberal president, Franklin D Roosevelt, voted against an anti-lynching bill, his eyes on the Southern vote.

It was 10 more years, 30 years ago

last Monday, before Jackie Robinson became the first black player in major league baseball. A highly intelligent man, Robinson was also a hard case who could handle vicious attempts at intimidation. And yet his early death was said to be partly the result of having to deal with ongoing prejudice.

We need to understand that politically correct terminology does little more than obscure racism. Fame to go with the view that he may well be the greatest of all golfers will not provide Tiger Woods with complete immunity from attempts to discredit him. As for changing the face of golf, it is a marvellous idea into which youth may breathe some life but right now it remains a fantasy.

Boon teaching Durham the Tasmanian way

These days, siding with the underdog is a dying vocation and about as fashionable as following 10 pints of ale with a red hot vindaloo. Everyone, it seems, likes a winner, which makes it all the more curious why someone as successful as David Boon, the recently retired Ayers Rock of Australian cricket, should want to come and captain Durham County Cricket Club, a win-free zone for the whole of last season bar a single victory in the Sunday League.

The challenge facing Boon is about as great as it gets, though leading Assam to victory in India's Ranji Trophy would run it close.

Morale in the North-east is not high and Boon must rekindle the enthusiasm of a team that has suffered numerous indignities, not least the high price to be paid for being on the margin, where over-inflated salaries have been paid to a host of rapidly deflating players: a situation of high investment and zero return that is close to bringing cricket lovers in Tony Blairland to crisis point.

Being a Tasmanian probably helps. Certainly the island triangle that hangs from Australia's underbelly has always had to overcome an inferiority complex where the rest of the country is involved.

"There are a lot of similarities between Durham and what Tassie was like six or seven years ago," says Boon, idly fingering his diamond eardrum as he and the rest of Durham's middle order watch the openers give the students of Oxford University the runaround.

"So when Geoff Cook [Durham's director of cricket] flew out to have a chat about what had been happening, I really had no hesitation in coming. I saw it as a good challenge as well as something to keep me motivated. Now I'm here I can definitely feel the change of attitude and direction we made

Derek Pringle meets the new messiah of Chester-le-Street and finds a man well versed in the problems he and his team face over the coming months

back there. Hopefully that experience can help Durham.

"I like to look at last season in a positive light in that the only way for us to go is up. That begins with attitude and I want us to go out there and feel we can win. Not just to turn up and expect to lose."

He says that Durham already feels like home and that his wife Pip and their three children are all excited by the move. Mind you, one thing that may not prove quite so homely is the square at Chester-le-Street. Unlike Boon's home track at the Bellerive Oval in

"The move to appoint Atherton for the whole summer is a positive one, an important signal"

Hobart - a batsman-friendly surface the Australian leg-spinner Kerry O'Keefe once called the Autobahn - the pitches at Durham's splendid HQ are as spiteful as they come.

Short of dousing the fruity wickets with Agent Orange, however, he has been given more or less a free rein to mould the team to his requirements but admits it will take a little time before he knows the players well enough to realise what his best options are.

"As soon as I can remember all the names, my job is to improve the team's performance between the hours of 11 and six. To do that I hope to create a

good team atmosphere that breeds confident and positive players. I've only been here a few days, but from what I've seen, everyone is just as keen to do well and try and turn things around."

Like Allan Border, the stolid give-no-quarter captain Boon most resembles as a player, a stint in county cricket has always been something he wanted to experience.

"No matter how far down a certain road you've gone, you can always learn more. The experience of coming over here, especially during Ashes tours, was a real bonus and whetted my appetite. To play in different conditions and have to adapt your game to them is one of the great joys of the game."

"I almost played for Gloucestershire, but one of my knees needed a bit of a clean-up after a tour of Pakistan. I also got about two inches from signing for Warwickshire in 1994. But at the last minute Dermot Reeve decided they wanted a bowler to replace Allan Donald. When that fell through they approached me again. By then it was too late so they signed Brian Lara, which worked out well for them." The twinkling eyes betraying the ironic humour hidden by the deadpan delivery.

He feels that county cricket is on the right path now that four-day cricket is the norm. "Before the change it was a bit slapdash and relied on false set-up declarations, unlike Shield cricket in Australia, where every day in the 10-match season really counts. Now that you've got four days at 110 overs a day, it allows you to play the game properly."

For his country, Boon was "Mr Dependable," a batsman



David Boon, the new Durham captain, takes a quick break during proceedings at The Parks yesterday

Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

who sold his wicket dear and kept his advice cheap, attributes Durham will be hoping rub off on their inconsistent batsmen. With his junior Merv Hughes moustache, he looks like a polar explorer, though a reputation for a mighty thirst - he is reputed to have beaten Rod Marsh's liver-wrenching 42-can record for beers sunk on the Sydney to London flight - means it is more likely to be lager spume on his bristles than frost.

Having scored 7,442 runs in 107 Tests for Australia, Boon, before his retirement last year, had managed to climb the game's Mount Olympus without anyone really noticing. The method and the man are distinctly similar and I remember Allan Border once describing him as a man of few words who, when he did open his mouth, immediately had the ears of all those around him.

"In Australia, the dressing-room is very much an open forum. Everybody has as much right to say something as anybody else, irrespective of who they are or what they've done. That way everyone feels comfortable when they walk in, and that they belong there. It's much easier to perform when you're in an environment where people clearly believe in you."

It was not always like that though, and before taking the 1987 World Cup, Australia had not won so much as a chook (chicken) raffle in four years; a situation made worse by having lost successive Ashes series to a dominant England.

"I believe talent goes in circles. When I first started England was on top and we were the ones getting our butts kicked. Over a 12-year period that's been turned round and England seem to be where we were in 1985."

However, apart from the un-

questioning motivation that the beloved "Green Baggy" (Australia's distinctive Test cap) has over men of all ages, Boon believes it was the Aussie selectors who broke the mould and laid the foundations for the successes of the last 10 years.

"They decided to pick from an unofficial squad of about 16 guys and give them as much opportunity as possible over a two-year period. To know that someone was going to stick with you even if you failed gave us all a lot of confidence."

There were other factors and Aussie cricketers of the Eighties were said to suffer from Botham phobia, and when he wanted, Australia's prospects waxed. It is a syndrome many feel Shane Warne is about to inflict upon England's batsmen, who have rarely coped well with high quality leg-spinners. "It's possible, but what you've got to look at is that Warne's

best leggie going around. The beauty about him is that he can create pressure as well as take wickets. To go for only two and a half runs per over in Test cricket is phenomenal."

What advice, if any, does he give the Tasmanian batsmen when they take on Victoria and Warne's tweaking them like a buzzsaw?

He pauses, as if to weigh up whether or not to give anything away to the old enemy, but decides to anyway. "We all know that Shane's a 'dry' bowler [an expression that means he bowls very few bad balls]. That means you really have to concentrate, not only to keep him out, but to make sure that when that loose delivery does come, you put the thing away."

Mind you, he feels the pacesmen Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie give Australia's attack a useful edge. "Glenn's sharp, he's got good control and will

bow all day. He's actually got a strike rate as good as Warne's," he says with an ever so slight bit of menace.

So what does he think the Ashes has in store for Michael Atherton's men, now that they are taking on a de-Booned Australian side?

"I thought there were a lot of signs of improvement in New Zealand. Also the move to appoint Atherton for the whole summer is a positive one. It's important to give a team signals like that. When Australia were struggling and rebuilding in the mid-1980's, faith and stability were important factors."

"Of course I'll have to go for our blokes, but if England can go through the summer using a minimal squad, instead of the 30 or so players that have been called up during the previous two Ashes campaigns, I think it'll be a lot closer than many have been predicting."

Wood brings colour to grey day Two-year Aamir ban

JON CULLEY reports from Headingley Yorkshire 289 v Lancashire 45-1

The sun went in more or less as the players took the field here yesterday, which Yorkshire will hope is not an omen after last season's ultimately unrewarded promise. In fact, the day's subsequent greyness was in keeping with the low key nature of the cricket in a fixture that illustrates how attempts to manufacture a competitive atmosphere seldom work.

Opening the season with a Roses friendly probably seemed a good idea at the time, when

a change in the Championship programme limited the traditional rivals to one confrontation per year. But if Lancastrian and Yorkshire ever craved a contest with nothing at stake there was little evidence yesterday, when spectators paying at the gate numbered 135.

It has the look of a second XI match, which cannot have helped. Many of the bigger names are absent, either because they are injured, engaged at Edgbaston or attending an England squad session. And mid-April, these days, is too early for overseas players to be involved.

An opportunity, then, for the underdog, among them Matthew Wood, a 20-year-old right-hand batsman from Emley,

who marked his first-class debut by scoring 81 before an inswinging delivery from Peter Martin had him bow shortly after lunch.

Wood, who has represented England at Under-17 and Under-19 level, is another product of the Yorkshire Academy. He earned his place after making a century on the county's pre-season tour of the West Indies.

With the former England opener Martyn Moxon offering guidance after Mike Watkinson won the toss and chose to field, Wood looked comfortable from the outset. Moxon was bowled by Ian Austin, after which Wood survived a sharp chance to guily off Austin on 23 but dominated a third-wicket stand of 77 with the captain, David Byas.

The other opportunist was Bradley Parker, squeezed out by the Australian Michael Bevan, last season Yorkshire's best batsman, who looked to be another Australian, Michael Slater, will replace Bevan this year. In the meantime, Parker caught the eye with a forceful unbeaten 85.

On an easy-paced pitch, Watkinson was the most penetrative bowler before lunch, after which no one did more damage than the off-spinner, Gary Yates, another who has to make do with meagre rations, largely because of Watkinson's versatility. Yates' four wickets included that of Gareth Batty - 19-year-old brother of Jeremy - whose debut, in contrast to Woods', lasted one ball.

The Pakistan opener Aamir Sohail, who has played in 34 Tests, was banned from international and domestic matches for two years by the Pakistan Cricket Board yesterday.

The PCB disciplinary committee chairman, Talat Ali Malik, said Aamir was guilty of violating its code of conduct by levelling "baseless charges of match-fixing and betting" against some national team members.

"We gave him enough time to provide solid proof but he was not willing to co-operate," Malik added. Aamir described it as an "act of victimisation. It was expected. It is aimed to ruin my career. But I am not worried at all." Aamir can appeal with-

in the next 60 days. Mark Taylor is set to remain the Australian captain for this summer's Ashes tour, despite his continued poor form with the bat. He was told yesterday by the Australian Cricket Board that his position is safe. The rest of the Australian squad will be announced today.

Ashley Giles, Warwickshire's left-arm spinner, and the Yorkshire all-rounder Craig White have withdrawn from the England A versus The Rest game starting at Edgbaston tomorrow. Giles suffered a recurrence of a knee injury and is replaced in the A side by Peter Such of Essex. White has a shoulder injury and his place in the Rest is taken by Ben Hollis, younger brother

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

First-class matches	
<i>(First day of four)</i>	
Yorkshire v Lancashire	
HEADLINE: Yorkshire, with nine first-class wickets standing, are 289 runs behind Lancashire. Today: 11.0.	
Lancashire won toss	
YORKSHIRE - First innings	
D Bloor b Martin	23
N J Spink b Martin	21
D Bloor c Haynes b Watkinson	15
P A Fothergill b Watkinson	10
B Parker not out	10
G A Chapman c and b Austin	35
G A Wood c Fothergill b Watkinson	14
G M Hamilton c and b Yates	5
G M Hamilton b Yates	5
D Batty b Martin	1
D Batty c Haynes b Martin	1
Extras (bats not out)	12
Total (92.3 overs)	289
1-24: 2-35: 3-120: 4-136: 5-203: 6-220	
Lancashire - First innings	
S P Handley c and b Watkinson	11
A J Watson not out	2
I J Holmes not out	2
Extras (bats not out)	1
Total (10.3 overs)	12
1-1: 2-2: 3-3: 4-4: 5-5: 6-6: 7-7: 8-8: 9-9: 10-10	
Cambridge Univ v Derbyshire	
HEADLINE: Cambridge University, with nine first-class wickets standing, are 94 runs behind Derbyshire. Today: 11.0.	
Cambridge University won toss	
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY - First innings	
S E Smith not out	79
A S Roberts not out	28
A N Hargrave b P Jones	28
V P Crane b P Jones	57
N J Vandriel c and b R Jones	13
A K Watson not out	2
P A De Freitas c Hargrave b P Jones	22
G W Roberts not out	30
Extras (bats not out)	27
Total (107.3 overs)	282
1-24: 2-35: 3-148: 4-197: 5-261: 6-269: 7-308	
Derbyshire - First innings	
D Bloor b P Jones	27
S E Smith b P Jones	11
A S Roberts b P Jones	11
A N Hargrave b P Jones	11
V P Crane b P Jones	11
N J Vandriel b P Jones	11
A K Watson b P Jones	11
P A De Freitas b P Jones	11
G W Roberts b P Jones	11
Extras (bats not out)	11
Total (107.3 overs)	282
1-24: 2-35: 3-148: 4-197: 5-261: 6-269: 7-308	
Cambridge Univ v Derbyshire - Second innings	
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S E Smith not out	79
A S Roberts not out	28
A N Hargrave b P Jones	28
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N J Vandriel c and b R Jones	13
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1-24: 2-35: 3-148: 4-197: 5-261: 6-269: 7-308	
Derbyshire - Second innings	
HEADLINE: Derbyshire, with nine first-class wickets standing, are 94 runs behind Cambridge University. Today: 11.0.	
Derbyshire won toss	
DERBYSHIRE - Second innings	
D Bloor b P Jones	27
S E Smith b P Jones	11
A S Roberts b P Jones	11
A N Hargrave b P Jones	11
V P Crane b P Jones	11
N J Vandriel b P Jones	11
A K Watson b P Jones	11
P A De Freitas b P Jones	11
G W Roberts b P Jones	11
Extras (bats not out)	11
Total (107.3 overs)	282
1-24: 2-35: 3-148: 4-197: 5-261: 6-269: 7-308	

A close call for Dr B

Dr Wilfried Bechtolsheimer, who was second reserve for the British Olympic dressage team last year, gained a narrow Grand Prix victory here yesterday on his new mount, Metterlich.

This was the third Grand Prix test that Dr B (as he is known) has ridden on the 12-year-old stallion whom he bought in Germany at the end of January. Though talented, he was lucky to defeat Fiona Bigwood and

the chestnut Dance and Fly. The winning margin was a mere 0.03 per cent and Bigwood must have lost at least when her horse became upset by the clanking of a tractor and trailer at the end of the arena. This was her first show in England on Dance and Fly, who had won nine Grand Prix in Germany before she acquired him.

At 20, Bigwood is still eligible for the Young Riders team, but it is quite possible that she will be selected for the senior squad for this year's European Championships. Results, *Sporting Digest*, page 29

Hull's double dealing

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD reports from Ardingly

The First Division leaders, Hull, have continued their team-strengthening by signing Jason Lawrence from Salford and Paul Crook from Oldham. Lawrence, an Australian full-back who has played for Nottingham, Huddersfield and York, has been released by Salford following the club record signing of Gary Broadbent and has joined Hull on a free transfer.

Crook, a utility player who made 13 Super League ap-

pearances for Oldham last season, cost £10,000.

The former Hull loose forward Dean Busby has been transferred by St Helens at £75,000. Busby was an £80,000 signing in August 1985, but has been hampered by injury over the past year.

John Joyner, who recently resigned as coach at Castleford, is being linked with the vacant job at Featherstone Rovers. David Ward stepped down as Featherstone coach at the weekend and the club say that it could be two weeks before a new appointment is made.

Richardson's run ends

Tennis
Andrew Richardson's impressive run of results came to an end in Tokyo yesterday when he was beaten in the second round of the Japan Open by Switzerland's Marc Rosset.

The 23-year-old left-hander from Lincolnshire, who was forced to win two qualifying matches to enter the main draw, put up a brave fight against the former Olympic champion. Richardson fought back after losing the first set on a tie-break but it was Rosset who booked

a third-round place with a 7-6, 6-2 victory.

Richardson, who was Great Britain's success in the Davis Cup defeat by Zimbabwe, reached his highest world ranking of 262 earlier this week, and could now go into the top 250. The Wimbledon champion and No 1 seed, Richard Krajicek, beat South African Neville Godwin in straight sets. Rising Romanian player Irina Spicre and former winners Brenda Schultz-McCarthy and Lori McNeil, DFS Classic in Birmingham from 9 to 15 June.

مكتبة من الأصول



In tomorrow's Independent
County-by-county guide to the
1997 cricket season

sport

Boon the enforcer
Derek Pringle meets the new
Durham captain, page 30

Gould survives as Wales manager

Football
JON BRODWIN

Bobby Gould was retained as the manager of Wales yesterday after the Football Association of Wales' management committee accepted his apology for making alleged racist remarks. Gould's future had been in doubt after the Bolton Wanderers and Wales striker, Nathan Blake, accused him of racism two weeks ago.

Gould, who has fiercely denied any racist intent, welcomed the decision. "I have been cleared and I am delighted with that, but I knew in my own mind I had done nothing wrong," he said. "As far as I am concerned the matter is now closed and I am not going to say anything about it. All I want to do is get on with the job I am paid to do."

The issue is likely to rumble on, however. Blake has stated that he does not wish to play for Gould again, although he hinted yesterday that he may reverse that decision. "I don't know whether I will change my mind and play for Wales again if selected, because I haven't really thought about it yet," he said.

"I have spoken to my manager at Bolton, who says that I ought to play for my country, and I have spoken to my agent, who says that I should stand by my original decision."

Blake was particularly incensed by Gould's remarks about the Nottingham Forest striker, Pierre van Hooijdonk, following Wales' home defeat to the Netherlands in October. Gould has admitted calling Van Hooijdonk "a black bastard", but insists no offence was intended.

Blake has also cited a training ground incident before another World Cup qualifier, against Belgium, in which Gould told him he would "play for the blacks [black bits]". Blake subsequently withdrew from the substitutes' bench rather than sit alongside his manager during the game.

Gould's apology, rejected by Blake, appears to have been pivotal to the FAW's decision to back him. In a written statement, the association said it had taken into account a letter from Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, expressing admiration for Gould's apology and explanation of events.

Officials from England and Germany will outline their arguments for hosting the 2006 World Cup to the executive committee of Uefa, the governing body of European football, in Geneva today. The meeting was called after complaints from the Football Association that senior figures in Uefa were already committed to support of an exclusive European bid by the Germans.

"We will be asking Uefa if they are prepared to take a neutral position between our bid and Germany," Alec McGivern, the director of the FA's World Cup campaign, said. "If not, if they want to come out for one or the other, we want to know how they are going to do that, how they will achieve a democratic process that fairly assesses the merits of both bids."

The FA, which is budgeting £8m to £10m for its campaign, has made it clear it will continue with its bid regardless of the outcome of today's meeting.

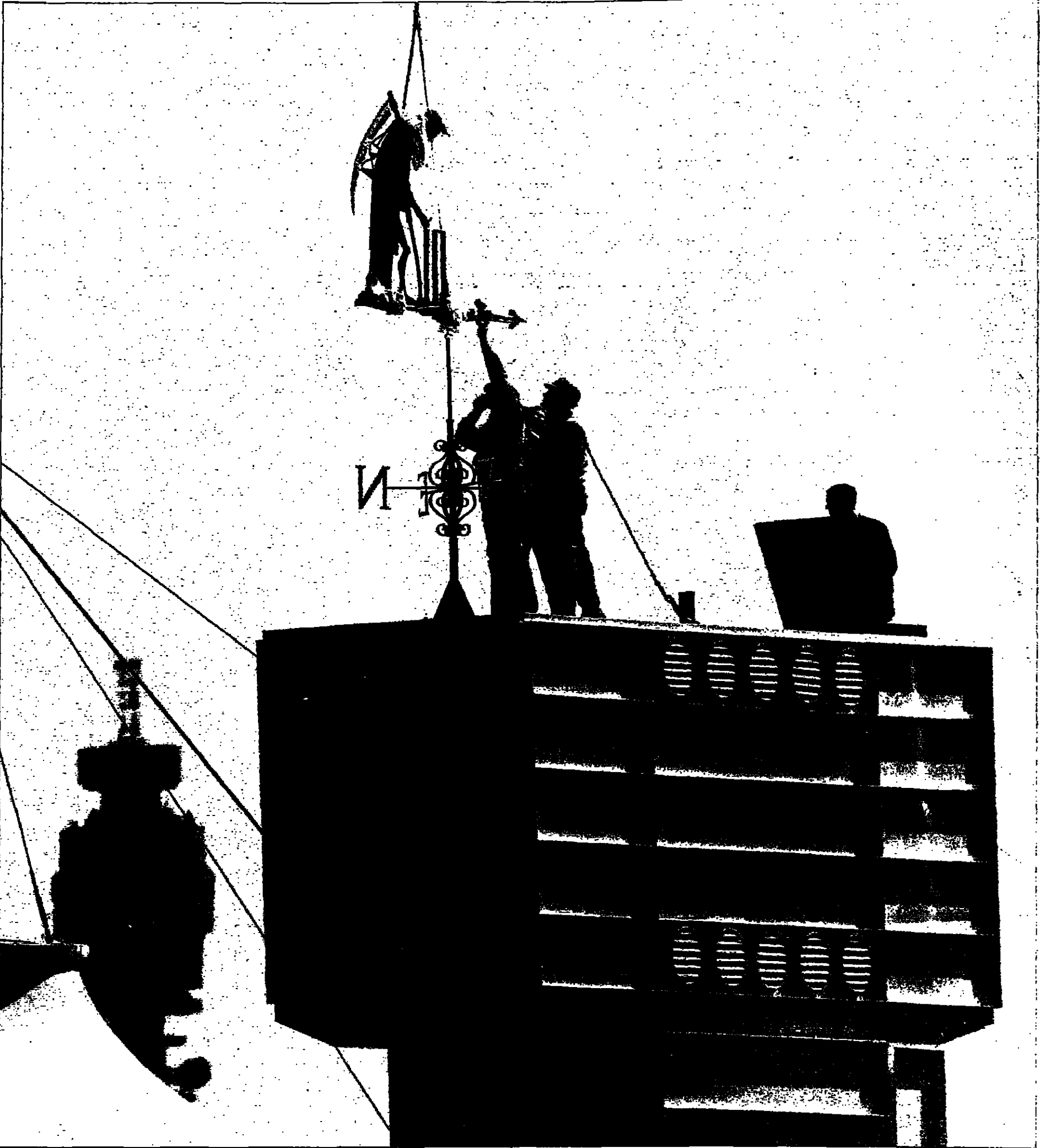
The FA has also said it will support the Football League in its efforts to reinstate a place in Europe for the winners of the Coca-Cola Cup. Next season Uefa Cup places will no longer be open to the winners of lesser cup competitions in countries where the top division has more than 13 teams.

Chelsea look set to sign the Nigeria international Celestine Babayaro from the Belgian club Anderlecht. They are understood to have agreed in principle to purchase the 18-year-old defender, who was a member of the Nigerian team which won gold at last summer's Atlanta Olympics.

The Middlesbrough manager, Bryan Robson, has confirmed his interest in signing Des Walker, whose contract at Sheffield Wednesday expires this summer. Walker, 31, may be available on a free transfer if the Bosman ruling is extended to include transfers between English clubs. Robson is likely to face competition from Nottingham Forest for the former England defender's signature.

More football, page 29

Time for a new for home as Lord's weather vane takes to Tavern



Vane glorious return: Old Father Time is gently lowered on to its new berth, the Tavern stand at Lord's, after a six-month restoration by Richard Quinnell. The famous weather vane had been a prominent feature of the Grandstand in St John's Wood, north London, since 1928

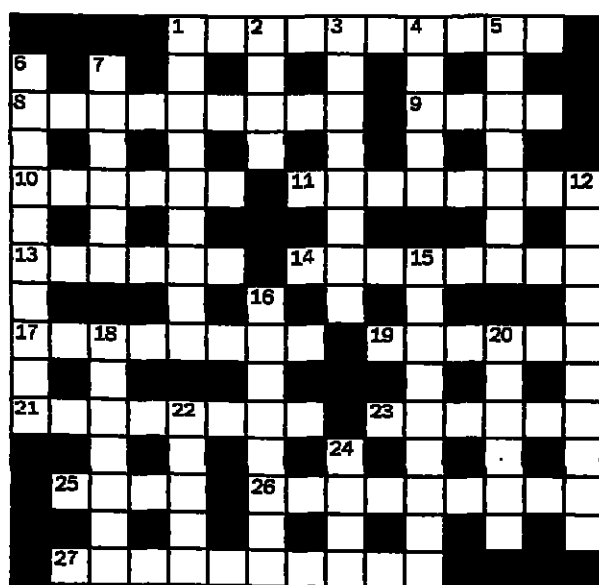
Photograph: Mark Pain

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3275 Thursday 17 April

By Mass

Wednesday's solution



DOWN
1 One figure skirting river and canal (9)
2 Gnat at stalk (4)
3 Faults of receivers (8)
4 Broad taste, but eschewing seconds (5)
5 Yobbo's nicked ring and fine watch (7)
6 Does it ensure a high turnover? (10)
7 Deputy's trapped State law-breaker (6)
8 Level University, in match at last (10)
9 Wound up by crack in bar, on time (9)

ACROSS
1 I'm for having billion in bundle? Not likely (10)
8 Irregular rebates, of course (5,4)
9 Game reserve (4)
10 In a short time meal must follow (6)
11 Animal's bound, attached to stake (8)
13 Unit's at fault, leading to burst (6)
14 Appeal in band strikes the Parisian as slight (8)
17 Probes with bugs quietly concealed (8)
19 Points to cultivate, it's said, in conduct (6)
21 Bridge players inclined to get jomed up (8)
23 Fluid, fourth of butane, feeding guttering lamps (6)

25 Obscure English coin (4)
26 Expert with hammer securing curling ornate patterns (9)
27 Rise before commotion (10)

16 Jack's runny nose (8)
18 One recruited by joining agency? (7)
20 Boss, if yielding, has to harden (6)
22 Bank, quiet little one (5)
24 Man I almost twist? (4)

Johnson eager to make second comeback

Athletics

The disgraced former 100 metres world record holder Ben Johnson wants to make another comeback. Johnson is training near Ottawa and wants to challenge the Olympic champion, his fellow Canadian Donovan Bailey, if the International Amateur Athletic Federation agrees to lift his lifetime ban.

"The only thing I don't have is the race edge," the 35-year-old Johnson said. "The speed and endurance are there, but the mind isn't there 100 per cent. It won't take long."

"It's 100 per cent that this man is back," Morris Chrobotek, Johnson's manager and agent said. "He has served his time for an alleged second offence. He's clean. He's raw. He's back."

Athletics Canada, the sport's governing federation in the country, and Chrobotek agreed on Tuesday to send the IAAF Council a letter asking it to reconsider Johnson's ban at its meeting on 29-30 May. The letter says the ban prevents Johnson, who still considers himself a full-time athlete, from earning a living.

Johnson tested positive for Stanozolol in 1988 and was suspended for two years after winning the Olympic 100m title at Seoul in a world record 9.79sec. In January 1993, he was suspended for life after a second positive test for steroids.

Johnson said he is scheduled to run at meetings on 1 June in Bratislava and 5 June in Rome, assuming the IAAF lifts the ban. Meanwhile Bailey will officially become the 100m world-record holder this week. Usually

world records are ratified within a few weeks, but all the records from last summer's Olympics, including Bailey's 9.84 in the 100m and Michael Johnson's 19.32 for the 200m, have yet to be ratified by the IAAF.

The IAAF general secretary, Istvan Gyulai, blames USA Track and Field, the American governing body, for the delay, and brushed aside reports that ratification was being withheld because of a lab error in Atlanta.

A few months ago, it was revealed that five to seven positive drug tests from the Atlanta Games were disregarded because the contract with the testing lab had expired before the Games ended. "It has nothing to do with that," Gyulai said. He blamed the problem in delays in obtaining the proper paperwork from USA Track and Field.

Detroit ban for dead octopuses

Ice hockey

ANDREW MARTIN

What has 10 legs, Red Wings and is banned from the Detroit home of one of the National Hockey League finest? Here's a hint: the answer concerns one of the more bizarre American sporting traditions come play-off time.

Fans of the Detroit Red Wings caught bringing dead octopuses into the Joe Louis Arena - or,

worse, chucking them on to the rink - are to be thrown out.

The practice of lobbing the eight-legged creatures on to the ice has been a play-off ritual for Red Wings fans since 1952. That is when the first octopus was tossed at the defunct Olympia Stadium, each arm representing the number of victories needed to win the Stanley Cup. It now takes 16 victories to win the out-sized trophy, but the tradition has continued.

In September, however, the

NHL said that a home team would be penalised if a game is held up because of fans throwing objects on the ice.

The new rule was imposed largely in response to Florida fans, who littered the ice with hundreds of plastic rats whenever the Panthers scored last season.

Hence the Red Wings' warning to their loyal followers on the eve of yesterday's opening play-off game at home against the St Louis Blues.

Bernie Ecclestone challenged over his stake
in Formula One - Page 22